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BABA WA
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BABA WA BAMBUTI: Obisk misijonarja in antropologa Paula Schebeste na Slovenskem leta 1933 in njegova afriška zbirka v Slovenskem etnografskem muzeju

BABA WA BAMBUTI: The visit of the missionary and anthropologist Paul Schebesta to Slovenia in 1933 and his African collection at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum

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BABA WA BAMBUTI: OBISK MISIJONARJA IN ANTROPOLOGA PAULA SCHEBESTE
NA SLOVENSKEM LETA 1933 IN NJEGOVA AFRIŠKA ZBIRKA V SLOVENSKEM
ETNOGRAFSKEM MUZEJU /

BABA WA BAMBUTI: THE VISIT OF THE MISSIONARY AND ANTHROPOLOGIST
PAUL SCHEBESTA TO SLOVENIA IN 1933 AND HIS AFRICAN COLLECTION AT
THE SLOVENE ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM

Muzej krščanstva na Slovenskem / Slovene Museum of Christianity
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SLOVENSKI ETNOGRAFSKI MUZEJ

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BABA WA BAMBUTI



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na Slovenskem leta 1933 in njegova afriška zbirka
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The visit of the missionary and anthropologist
Paul Schebesta to Slovenia in 1933
and his African collection
at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum





*Sedaj je stal pred mano pragozdni človek,
Pigmejec, zastopnik pravljичnega plemena,
ki predstavlja najbolj svojevrstno raso sveta.*

Paul Schebesta, 1929

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Že po tradiciji je tudi letos v Sloveniji potekala prireditev 'Misijonska nedelja'. Osrednje praznovanje je bilo 22. oktobra v Novi Gorici, misijonark in misijonarjev po svetu pa so se spomnili v vseh slovenskih župnijah. Na isti datum pa je bilo pred 84 leti veliko misijonsko praznovanje v Ljubljani, kjer je bil osrednji dogodek predavanje misijonarja in antropologa dr. Paula Schebeste iz Avstrije (sl. 1). Morda samo predavanje ne bi pritegnilo večje pozornosti, vendar je bila napovedana vsebina več kot idealna za časopisne poročevalce, ki so takoj zaslutili senzacionalen učinek svojih prispevkov. Gostujoči predavatelj je nameraval govoriti o afriških plemenih, ki so jih po imenu vsi poznali, malo ljudi pa je vedelo, kdo sploh so. Schebesta je predaval o Pigmejcih, vendar ne o suhoparnih podatkih iz enciklopedije in iz različnih virov evropskih popotnikov. Predaval je o lastnih doživetjih med bivanjem v Kongu, na misijonsko prireditev je prinesel svoje terenske posnetke in jih kot črno-bele diapozitive uporabil za predavanje. Napoved, da bo Schebesta govoril in kazal slike o svojih izkušnjah in odkritjih v Afriki, je bila predstavljena tudi v časopisu *Slovenec*:

»Na misijonsko nedeljo, dne 22. oktobra, se bo v Ljubljani vršila velika misijonska prireditev v Unionu. Glavna točka sporeda bo zanimivo predavanje s skioptičnimi slikami, ki ga bo imel v mednarodnem svetu znan raziskovalec etnolog p. Pavel Šebesta iz St. Gabriela pri Dunaju, številne skioptične slike nam bodo prikazovale življenje srednjeafriških črncev in pritlikavcev (Pigmejcev), ki žive v pragozdovih ob reki Kongo. Predavatelj sam je v letih 1929 in 1930 izvršil dve ekspediciji v pragozd Ituri ob Kongu, kamor so se Pigmejci umaknili pred pritiskom drugih črnskih plemen. Kot prvemu Evropejcu se je posrečilo p. Šebesti, da je dalj časa živel med plahimi pragozdnimi pritlikavci in spoznaval

njihovo življenje. O svojem bivanju med Pigmejci, o njihovem skrajno primitivnem načinu življenja, o njihovih šegah in navadah, kakor tudi o misijonskem delovanju med njimi, nam bo govoril predavatelj ob pestrih skioptičnih slikah.»¹

Dva dni kasneje je anonimni poročevalec še bolj spodbudil bralce, da se udeležijo predavanja, saj je nazorno izpostavil primitivno stopnjo afriških Pigmejcev, ki v prvi polovici 20. stoletja še vedno živijo tako, kot so Evropejci v prazgodovini: *»Na misijonski prireditvi, ki bo v nedeljo zvečer v Unionu, bomo ob originalnih skioptičnih slikah gledali najstarejša plemena človeškega rodu, namreč afriške Pigmejce, ki predstavljajo prakulturno raso človeštva, in nam dajejo verno sliko življenja in udejstvovanja, kakor so ga imeli naši evropski predniki pred davnimi tisočletji, ko so živeli v prazgodovinski dobi.»²* Avtor prispevka je z drugimi besedami povedal, da lahko na predavanju Schebeste tudi Slovenci spoznajo prazgodovinsko podobo svojih prednikov in s pomočjo Pigmejcev lažje razumejo lastno preteklost. Iz omenjene novice v časopisu *Slovenec* je tudi razvidno, da je organizator pripravil dve predavanji s plačljivimi vstopnicami, ki jih je bilo mogoče kupiti v predprodaji v unionski trafiki in v trafiki Šoukal pred škofijo. Cena vstopnice za prvo nedeljsko predavanje je bila za sedež po 6 in 4 Din, za stojišče pa po 2 Din. V ponedeljek, dne 23. oktobra, pa je imel Schebesta še drugo predavanje v hotelu Union, v t. i. dvorani z verando. Napoved se je glasila, da gre za *»znanstveno predavanje o Pigmejcih kot prakulturni rasi človeštva. Predavanje bo s skioptičnimi slikami in je namenjeno predvsem izobražencem, ki jih zanima problem najstarejših plemen na svetu. Vstopnina bo 5 in 3 Din«.*

Prihod znanega misijonarja in antropologa v Ljubljano je pomenil velik dogodek in hkrati priložnost, da se organizirajo predavanja tudi v drugih krajih. To ni šlo ravno po načrtih, saj je bil Schebestov urnik precej natrpan z obveznostmi in je zato v zadnjem trenutku potrdil predavanje v Celju, ki ga je imel na predvečer pred misijonsko nedeljo. Časopis *Slovenec* je komaj dan pred dogodkom prinesel novico: *»Sloviti raziskovalec in misijonar p. Pavel Šebesta bo predaval tudi v Celju. Šele včeraj se je posrečilo pridobiti slovitega učenjaka in misijonarja p. Pavla Šebesta, da se bo na svoji poti z Dunaja v Ljubljano ustavil tudi pri nas in imel v soboto zvečer v dvorani Ljudske posojilnice predavanje s skioptičnimi slikami, ki nam bodo prikazovale zanimivosti iz življenja pritlikavih plemen iz osrednje Afrike, Pigmejcev, ki žive v prazgodovini ob reki Kongo. Vstopnina bo nizka: sedeži po 4 Din, stojišča po 2 Din, tako da bo obisk tega velezanimivega predavanja vsakomur omogočen.»³*

V torek, 24. oktobra, je isti časopis povzel kratko poročilo o predavanju v Celju in posebej izpostavil: »Svetovno znani učenjak g. p. Šebesta je ob spremljevanju številnih skioptičnih slik podal navzočim nazorno sliko iz življenja pritlikavih Pigmejcev. Za lepo uspelo predavanje je občinstvo nagradilo g. predavatelja z dolgotrajnim odobravanjem. Žal, da je bilo predavanje prepozno naznanjeno, sicer bi se ga bilo gotovo udeležilo veliko več ljudi.«⁴

Schebesta je v nedeljo zjutraj iz Celja odpotoval v Ljubljano in se takoj začel pripravljati na večerno predavanje v hotelu Union. Nedeljska izdaja časopisa *Slovenec* je na tretji strani na kratko predstavila problematiko pigmejskega vprašanja, nekaj vrstic pa je bilo namenjenih tudi Schebesti kot 'raziskovalcu pritlikavih (pigmejskih) plemen'. Anonimni pisec je izpostavil, da je Schebesta velik poznavalec azijskih in afriških Pigmejcev, saj je živel med različnimi ljudstvi in ima bogate terenske izkušnje. Članek poudari zaskrbljenost zaradi ogroženosti Pigmejcev in izrazi bojazen, da bodo ta ljudstva v kratkem izginila: »Pritlikavska plemena, ki žive raztresena po najoddaljenejših delih sveta (Filipinski in Andamanski otoki, Ceylon, srednja in južna Afrika itd.), polagoma izumirajo in etnologi se zavedajo, da spada študij teh plemen med najnujnejše in najvažnejše probleme etnologije, ker bodo s pigmejci zginili s sveta najstarejši predstavniki človeške rase.« Članek, ki napoveduje predavanje Paula Schebeste na misijonsko nedeljo, v dveh stavkih opiše fizične lastnosti pigmejcev in bivalno kulturo, obširno pa zajame njihovo verovanje v eno in edino Najvišje bitje: »Velika senzacija za etnologe je dejstvo, da pigmejci, kjerkoli se nahajajo, izpovedujejo vero v eno samo Najvišje bitje in s tem je ona nazadnjaška in zastarela teorija, da se je človek prvotno nahajal v »prelogičnem«, polmračnem stanju svoje zavesti in da je šele po dolgih dobah polagoma sam ustvaril božanstva iz prvotne magije ali poboženja naravnih fenomenov, z jasnimi dejstvi odpravljena.«⁵

Ljubljanski predavateljski nastop Schebeste v nedeljo in v ponedeljek je bil več kot uspešen. Ne samo zaradi njegove izjemne retorike v nemščini, ampak predvsem zaradi privlačne vsebine, ki jo je ponudil vedoželjni publikli. Iz prvih časopisnih poročil je razvidno, da je za obe predavanji vladalo veliko zanimanje in da je bil obisk slavnega antropologa v veliko zadovoljstvo organizatorja in poslušalstva. Za podrobnejše novice o vsebini njegovih predavanj pa je bilo potrebno počakati do prvih novembrskih dni, ko je časopis *Slovenec* objavil daljši zapis izpod peresa neznanega avtorja z naslovom »Življenje med pritlikavci«, iz podnaslova pa je bilo razvidno, da gre za »Najmanjše in najstarejše človeško pleme«. Avtorjev povzetek predavanja nam

pokaže, da je Schebesta uvodoma predstavil svoje raziskave ljudstva Semang na polotoku Malaka in etničnih skupin ob reki Ituri v Kongu. Schebesta je na predavanju pokazal svoje terenske fotografije in na posnetkih opozoril na razliko med azijskimi in afriškimi ljudstvi. *»Azijski pigmejci so bolj temne barve. Do sedaj še ni pojasnjeno vprašanje, ali je med azijskimi in afriškimi pigmejci genetična vez, kako sorodstvo skupnega izvora. Vsekakor pigmejci niso degenerirani potomci visoko stasitih drugih ras, ampak so samostojno deblo človeške rase, in smemo reči relativno najstarejše. Prav v tej starosti je njihov pomen za kulturno zgodovino človeštva.«* je zapisal komentator v *Slovencu* in ob tem poudaril, da njihov način življenja in najbolj preprost 'kulturni inventar' kažeta na izjemno starost.⁶

Schebesta je na predavanju predstavil način bivanja v pragozdovih in za poslušalce je bil zagotovo zelo zanimiv podatek, da pri afriških pigmejcih majhne kočice postavljajo ženske. Začasne kočice so žene naredile iz upognjenih viter in vej, konstrukcijo so prekrile z listi in mahovi. Takšno bivališče je bilo narejeno v dveh urah in njegova preprosta zasnova je bila povezana z njihovim nomadskim življenjem, saj so se ljudje selili zaradi lovišč, po nekem obdobju pa so se tudi vrnili v opuščeno naselje. Predavatelj je očitno posebej izpostavil medsebojne odnose pri ljudstvih ob reki Ituri: *»Čeprav je njihova snovna kultura tako preprosta, imajo urejeno družabno življenje. Z malimi izjemami živijo v enoženskem zakonu in vzgajajo svojo deco v dobre ljudi. O kaki moralni razrvanosti ali divjem zakonu ni govora: družina je družabna in gospodarska enota, delo je enako razdeljeno med možem in ženo.«*⁷

Schebesta je kot teolog in raziskovalec izvora religije tudi na obeh predavanjih v Ljubljani poudaril, da med temi ljudstvi na skrajnem robu civilizacije obstaja vera v enega boga, v Najvišje bitje, ki so mu rekli Tore. Z njim so se preprosto pogovarjali, mu zaupali in ga na lovu pogosto prosili za pomoč. Verovanja v duhove in čarovništvo niso poznali. Na koncu je avtor slikovito povzel vsebino predavanja z naslednjimi besedami: *»Blodnje razvojnih teorij, ki so a priori trdile, da je človek začetkoma brez višjih idej in da se spoli pari po živalskem nagonu, so preživele. Dejstva prikazujejo prav nasprotno sliko. Pigmejci, katere bi smeli smatrati kot odcepek prvotne človeške rase, ki se je umaknila v pragozd in tam ohranila v tišini in samoti naravno deviško stanje prakulture, so popolnoma moralna bitja, ki imajo vse bistvene sposobnosti in lastnosti racionalnega človeka.«* Omenjeni članek iz časopisa *Slovenec*, ki je bil objavljen 8. novembra, je dobesedno povzel slovenski časopis v Argentini

Novi list - El nuevo periodico, ki je izšel dne 16. decembra 1933 v Buenos Airesu z naslovom »*Zanimivosti o najmanjšem človeškem plemenu*«. ⁸

Schebesta je iz Ljubljane odpotoval v Zagreb, kjer je tudi imel predavanja in se nato na poti proti Dunaju ustavil še v Mariboru. Tam je imel v predavalnici Ljudske univerze v petek, 27. oktobra, kar dve predavanji: enega za dijake, drugega pa za širšo javnost. Ljubljanski časopis *Slovenec* je isti dan v reklamnem oglasu nagovarjal bralce: »*To je prva prilika, da govori raziskovalec prakulture, ki je znan v evropskih etnoloških krogih, v Mariboru o verstvu, življenju, misijonskih uspehih med pritlikavci v Aziji in Afriki.*« ⁹

Paul Joachim Schebesta se je rodil 20. marca 1887 v vasi Groß Peterwitz v Gornji Šleziji. ¹⁰ Po končani gimnaziji se je odločil za študij teologije v misijonskem središču svetega Gabriela v Mödlingu pri Dunaju (Sankt Gabriel, Mödling bei Wien, sl. 3–4). Tu je imela sedež Družba Božje besede (nem. Gesellschaft des Göttlichen Wortes, lat. Societas Verbi Divini), ki je imela korenine v misijonskem redu, ki je izhajal iz nizozemskega kraja Steyl, po katerem so družbo in misijonarje imenovali tudi Steylovi misijonarji ali po nemško Steyler Missionare. Schebesta je poleg teologije v Mödlingu študiral tudi jezikoslovje in etnografijo. Med profesorji je bil tudi sloviti dr. Wilhelm Schmidt, ki je veljal za vodilno znanstveno avtoriteto na področju raziskovanja zgodovine religij (sl. 5). Schebesta se je pod Schmidtovim vplivom navdušil za preučevanje izvora verstev in kmalu je postal njegov najboljši učenec, ki je dosegel izjemno uspešno znanstveno kariero. K temu je prispeval predvsem z obsežnimi terenskimi raziskavami v Afriki in Aziji. Po vzoru svojega profesorja je sistematično objavljala terensko dokumentacijo, ki jo je ustvaril v času bivanja med ljudstvi ob reki Ituri v Kongu in med ljudstvi v pragozdovih na Malajskem polotoku. Znanstveno kariero je leta 1911 začel v Mozambiku in kasneje, med prvo svetovno vojno, delo nadaljeval v Lizboni na Portugalskem, kjer je preučeval zgodovinske vire za kraljestvo Mutapa, ki je v 15. stoletju obsegalo območja v južnem delu Afrike. Po vrnitvi v Mödling je prevzel afriško sekcijo v uredništvu revije *Anthropos*, toda že januarja leta 1924 je odpotoval v Malako, na južni del Malajskega polotoka, kjer je skoraj dve leti živel med nomadskim ljudstvom Semang. Ekspedicija v Azijo je že nakazala, v katero smer bo Schebesta zastavil antropološke raziskave v prihodnjih letih. Kot Schmidtov ožji sodelavec je nameraval s terenskimi raziskavami še bolj podkrepiti teoretična izhodišča svojega vzornika in doktrine o začetkih verovanja, ki jo je razvijala in zagovarjala skupina teologov in antropologov pri reviji *Anthropos*. Iskanje najstarejše vere na svetu

oziroma iskanje začetkov samega verovanja je pomenilo vračanje v preteklost s pomočjo ljudstev, ki so živel na težko dostopnih predelih in niso bila 'kontaminirana' z zunanjimi vplivi drugih kultur.

Schebesta je opravil več raziskovalnih ekspedicij v Kongo, kjer je največjo pozornost namenil ljudstvu Bambuti (Mbuti) v pragozdu ob reki Ituri. Zadnjo ekspedicijo v Kongo je izpeljal med letoma 1954 in 1955. Po vrnitvi v Mödling se je posvetil pedagoškemu delu in predavanjem s področja delovanja misijonarjev. Umrli je 17. septembra 1967 in je pokopan na zasebnem pokopališču Družbe Božje besede v Mödlingu, v neposredni bližini svojega profesorja Wilhelma Schmidta in sodelavca Wilhelma Koppersa (sl. 2). S številnimi objavljenimi članki in knjigami v nemškem, angleškem in češkem jeziku je postal vodilni strokovnjak na svetu, saj je razpolagal z izjemno obsežno terensko dokumentacijo s področja etnologije, kulturne antropologije in lingvistike (sl. 7). Glavnino njegovega arhiva danes hranijo v raziskovalnem centru Anthropos Institut v kraju Sankt Augustin v Nemčiji (Anthropos Institut, Die Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule SVD St. Augustin).¹¹

Na obisk Paula Schebeste in na njegova predavanja bi lahko Slovenci hitro pozabili, toda zaradi tematike, ki jo je raziskoval, je postal vse bolj popularen predvsem v teoloških krogih in deloma tudi v širši javnosti. Schebesta je živel med ljudmi, o katerih so se po svetu širile stereotipne predstave o zaozstali primitivni vrsti, ki se ne razlikuje veliko od živali. Njegove raziskave so ovrgle negativne podobe o ljudeh, ki so živeli v tropskem pragozdu Belgijskega Konga. V številnih publikacijah se je zelo sistematično lotil prikaza njihovega vsakdanjega življenja, načina preživetja, materialne kulture in predvsem analize duhovnega sveta. Prav to je bilo zelo pomembno za iskanja začetkov religije, saj so teologi, filozofi, misleci in znanstveniki različnih strok stoletja razmišljali o tem, kdaj se je pojavil prvi bog. Je bil sam ali jih je bilo več? Je bil on ali je bila morda ona? Morda pa sta bila oba ...

Schebesta je s somišljeniki iz Mödlinga odpiral nova obzorja v razumevanju izvora religije in pri tem je našel somišljenike tudi na Slovenskem. Zagotovo je bil njegov prvi sogovornik profesor dr. Lambert Ehrlich (sl. 6). Kot profesor primerjalnega veroslovja na Teološki fakulteti, teolog in etnolog je veljal za osrednjo katoliško avtoriteto misijonskega delovanja na Slovenskem. Bil je velik poznavalec tujih kultur in njihovega verovanja, magije in vraževerja. Ehrlich je v delih Paula Schebeste prepoznal atraktivne vsebine tudi za

širšo javnost in je zato prevzel pobudo, da Slovenci s pomočjo misijonskega tiska bolje spoznajo pigmejske kulture v Kongu, saj se v njihovem duhovnem svetu kažejo zametki najstarejše oblike religije – vera v enega boga.

Med obema vojnama je bila na Slovenskem zelo dobro razvita publicistična dejavnost misijonskega tiska. Izhajale so številne revije in publikacije za različne starostne stopnje. Lazaristi so pokrivali univerzalne misijonske vsebine in objavljali poročila iz vsega sveta, jezuiti so sloveli po izjemni organizaciji misijona v indijski Bengaliji in o tem pisali v posebnih revijah, na Metelkovi ulici 1 v Ljubljani pa je obstajalo društvo za podporo misijonarjem v Afriki. Društvo, ki so ga prostovoljno vodile ženske in se je imenovalo *Družba sv. Petra Klaverja za afriške misijone*, je izdajalo številne publikacije za otroke, mladino in odrasle bralce. Za popularizacijo misijonskega dela v obliki tiskanih medijev je skrbela predvsem Misijonska pisarna na Semeniški ulici 2 v Ljubljani, kjer je uredništvo vodil Ehrlich. Misijonska pisarna je med drugim izdajala tudi zelo priljubljeno zbirko *Tabu* z zelo širokim krogom privlačnih vsebin iz svetovne zgodovine in geografije. Zbirka drobnih knjižic v formatu 18 x 12 cm in obsegu okoli 36 strani je bralcem prinašala zanimive in poučne spise o tujih kulturah, raziskovalcih in misijonarjih. Priročno žepno izdajo knjižic je tiskala tiskarna v Grobljah pri Domžalah, kjer je bil osrednji slovenski misijonski center, za katerega so vzorno skrbeli lazaristi.

V 30. letih 20. stoletja najdemo med naslovi zbirke *Tabu* tudi knjižico z naslovom *Bambuti – pritikavci ob Kongu* (sl. 8). Izšla je pod zaporedno številko 13, toda brez navedbe leta izdaje. Zelo verjetno je bila natisnjena prav v letu, ko je Slovenijo obiskal Paul Schebesta. Leto dni prej je bila objavljena njegova knjiga z naslovom *Bambuti – Die Zwerge vom Kongo* (270 strani, 89 fotografij in 3 karte) pri založbi F. A. Brockhaus v Leipzigu. Pregled knjige kmalu pokaže sorodno vsebinsko in fotografsko gradivo, ki je seveda zelo skrčeno in prirejeno za knjižico v seriji *Tabu*. Tekst je zelo verjetno povzel in v slovenščini napisal odgovorni urednik Lambert Ehrlich. Avtor je imel očitno težave z odločitvijo, kaj naj izpusti, trudil se je namreč čim več teksta spraviti na razpoložljivih 36 strani. Odpovedal se je kolofonu in začel s tekstom takoj na notranji strani naslovne platnice in končal na notranji strani hrbtna platnice. Tako je besedilo spravil na 34 strani, skupaj s petimi črno-belimi fotografijami. Fotografije so preslikane iz omenjene nemške izdaje, prav tako so dobesedno iz nemščine prevedeni podnaslovi slik, npr. *Išumi, poglavar Balengov in njegov vazal, Pigmejec = Ischumi, der Hauptling der Balenga und sein Vasall, ein Pygmäe* (sl. 46). Morda je bil tej publikaciji

namenjen tudi zemljevid, ki ga je zelo verjetno narisal Ehrlich. Zemljevid, ki je shranjen v Nadškofijskem arhivu v Ljubljani, ni bil nikoli objavljen in prikazuje širše področje v Kongu, kjer je deloval Schebesta in oznake etničnih skupin na ozemlju pragozda ob reki Ituri (sl. 9–10).

Ehrlich je uvodoma pojasnil, da so o Pigmejcih, pritlikavcih iz osrednje Afrike, pisali že Homer, Herodot in Aristotel in da so bila antična pričevanja na meji fantazije. Šele nemški raziskovalec Georg August Schweinfurth je iz svojih potovanj v letih med 1868 in 1871 podrobneje poročal o njihovem resničnem obstoju. *»Od tistega časa srečamo njihovo ime v poročilih raznih afriških raziskovalcev, od katerih jih je vsak po svoje na novo odkril. Globljega vpogleda v svoje življenje pa kot pravi palčki do sedaj še niso nikomur dovolili.»* pravi Ehrlich. S tem nakaže, kako pomemben prispevek prinaša Schebesta, ki je med njimi preživel več mesecev, in poudari, da njegov potopis podaja izredno živahno podobo teh najmanjših ljudi na svetu, ki sodijo med najstarejše človeške rase (sl. 12-24). Iz uvoda na prvi strani izvemo tudi, da so ga domačini klicali »Baba wa Bambuti«, kar Ehrlich prevaja kot »oče pritlikavcev«, že v nadaljevanju, na drugi strani knjige, kjer se začne opis življenja v Kongu, pa Schebesta sam omeni isti naziv v prevodu kot »oče Pigmejcev« in doda: *»Na to ime sem v resnici ponosen; jamči mi za moje uspehe in je zame najlepše plačilo za vse mnogoštevilne in velike napore, ki sem jim bil izpostavljen ves čas svojih raziskovanj.»* Schebesta pa kasneje prizna, da so ga klicali tudi z manj častnim nazivom, saj so mu glede na barvo kože rekli Mucugu (belec). Tekst v knjižici opisuje Schebestovo prvo potovanje v Kongo, ki je trajalo od januarja 1929 do septembra 1930.¹²

Po uspešni predavateljski turneji oktobra 1933 je bil Schebesta med Slovenci vse bolj prepoznavna oseba, saj so mediji še dolgo sledili njegovemu raziskovalnemu delu, poročali pa so tudi o raziskavah, ki jih je opravil v Kongu skupaj z dr. Martinom Gusindejem, sodelavcem iz Mödlinga.¹³

Tudi teologi so skrbno spremljali njegove dosežke, predvsem na področju raziskovanja zgodovine religije. Poleg Ehrlicha je bil Vilko Fajdiga tisti, ki je leta 1963 za slovenske študente teologije pripravil priročnik z naslovom *O zgodovinski podobi najstarejše religije*. Fajdiga, ki je doktorat zagovarjal na Katoliškem inštitutu v Parizu, je bil velik strokovnjak za primerjalno verslovje in se je dobro zavedal pomena raziskav, ki so jih razvijali v Mödlingu. V omenjenem priročniku je Fajdiga napisal 48 strani dolgo poglavje o Wilhelmu Schmidtu in njegovem krogu sodelavcev. Med njimi je tudi Schebesta, ob

njem pa še Paul Arndt, Martin Gusinde, Wilhelm Koppers in Aleksandar Gahs. Slednji je še posebej zanimiv, saj se je iz Mödlinga vrnil v rodno Hrvaško in v Zagrebu na Teološki fakulteti predaval zgodovino religije.

Wilhelm Schmidt je imel izjemno teoretično znanje, obvladoval pa je tudi materialno kulturo različnih ljudstev po svetu. Papežu Piju XI. ni bilo treba dolgo razmišljati, katera oseba je najbolj primerna za ureditev prvega Misijskega etnološkega muzeja v Lateranski palači sredi Rima (Museo Missionario-Ethnologico). Schmidt je bil direktor papeške muzejske ustanove od leta 1926 do 1938. Fajdiga je pri opisu Schmidtove antropološke šole v ospredje postavil vprašanje obstoja Najvišjega bitja in razlage teologov, antropologov in etnologov o tem. Glavnino dela je ob tem vprašanju opravil kar Schmidt sam, ki si je zastavil smer iskanja Najvišjega bitja v svojem kapitalnem delu v 12 volumnih z naslovom »Der Ursprung der Gottesidee«, o katerem je sam izpostavil: *»Pri svojem raziskovanju in zaključkih se nisem nikoli opiral na kakšen svetovni nazor, ampak vedno in povsod samo na etnološka in lingvistična dejstva, ki so jih ugotovili raziskovalci najbolj različnih smeri in svetovnih nazorov. To velja brez izjeme tudi za vero v enega vsemogočnega in očetovskega Stvarnika pri najstarejših narodih.«* Schmidt je poudaril pomen gospodarske kulture in družbenoekonomskih razmer, v kateri je živel primitiven človek, saj se je zavedal, da imata gospodarstvo in vloga lastnine velik vpliv na duhovno življenje, vero in moralo. Metodologijo dela na terenu je Schmidt za svoje sodelavce začrtal z ostrimi zahtevami in Fajdiga povzema: *»Prva zahteva, ki so jo morali skrbno izpolnjevati, je bila stroga prepoved površnosti in apriornosti raziskovanja. Površno in hitro zbiranje etnološkega gradiva, ki bi ga nabrali na vseh straneh, ne bi mnogo koristilo. Treba je bilo vsak posamezen izraz kulturnega življenja najprej natančno opisati po kraju in razmerah, v katerih so ga našli. Nato pa ga je bilo potrebno kar najbolj skrbno raziskati, opisati in skušati razložiti iz kulturne sredine, v kateri so ga našli. Kako naj bi sicer posamezne izraze ene kulture (npr. orodje, orožje, hiša, verovanje, družinski obred) mogli primerjati z istovrstnimi izrazi v drugi kulturi, če bi izraz oziroma elementi obeh kultur ne bili najprej vsestransko točno ugotovljeni?«* To je bil temelj metodologije, t. i. kriterij forme ali kriterij kvalitete in kvantitete. Schmidtovo dolgoletno delo je pripeljalo do t. i. Teorije kulturnih krogov, ki so ji zvesto sledili in razvijali tudi njegovi učenci v Mödlingu.

Fajdiga v publikaciji iz leta 1963 podrobno opisuje ozadje in pomen te teorije in med drugim tudi navaja: *»Seveda ima ugotovitev sorodnosti ali celo*

enakosti enega kulturnega kompleksa z drugim, ki je morda zelo daleč kje, izredno ugodne posledice za spoznanje prave podobe posameznih kulturnih kompleksov. Zelo možno je namreč, da je v teku tisočletij ta ali oni izraz kulture iz določenega kompleksa izginil, kar je zelo škoda. Toda ta škoda se da popraviti. Etnolog pogleda, ali ni morda v drugem kulturnem krogu, ki sta ga kriterij kvalitete in kvantitete ugotovila kot enakega, tak izraz še ohranjen. V takem primeru ga je dovoljeno brez strahu nadomestiti z enakim iz enakega kulturnega kroga.» Ta teorija je postala priljubljena tudi med arheologi, ki so s pomočjo elementov obstoječih 'prastarih' kultur rekonstruirali pojave v prazgodovini. Teorijo kulturnih krogov je uporabil tudi Ehrlich v svoji disertaciji z naslovom »Origin of Australian Beliefs«, ki jo je izdal v Mödlingu leta 1922.

Fajdiga je naredil kratek povzetek Schmidtovih dognanj o izvoru religije in o značilnostih Najvišjega bitja, kot so ga poznala različna ljudstva, ki so jih etnologi in antropologi preučevali konec 19. in v prvi polovici 20. stoletja. V opisu Najvišjega bitja večkrat omeni, kaj je v Afriki in v Aziji odkril Schebesta in ker so bila ta odkritja zelo pomembna, je Fajdiga drugo polovico objave namenil prirejenemu prevodu njegove knjige o izvoru religije. Z avtorjevim dovoljenjem je prevedel čez 60 strani knjige z naslovom »Ursprung der Religion«, ki jo je Schebesta izdal v Berlinu leta 1961. V omenjeni knjigi je predstavljen širok spekter različnih oblik verstev, misterijev, magije in obredov. Na vprašanje o izvoru religije je Schebesta povzel: *»O poreklu religije ni mogoče z vidika etnologije in arheologije ničesar trditi, ker živih praljudi nismo našli, obstoječa primitivna ljudstva pa nikakor ne smemo smatrati, da so praljudje.»* V knjigi je glede afriških predstav o Bogu pogosto omenjena povezava s soncem. Sonce je Božje oko, je Bog, ki vse vidi in je povsod prisoten. *»On je kot sonce. Če bi vedel, da obstaja dežela, kjer ljudje ne poznajo sonca, potem bi verjel, da ti ljudje ne vedo ničesar o bogu.»* je zapisal Schebesta pripovedovanje domačina iz Zambije.

Povezava s soncem je zanimiva v kontekstu monoteistične vere, ki je bila prisotna v najstarejših segmentih duhovnega sveta starega Egipta. Čeprav jo je kasneje prekril politeistični panteon, je v osnovi ostala religija starega Egipta ves čas monoteistična. To je bila vera v sončnega boga Amon-Raja (Atona). Civilizacija starega Egipta je skozi več tisočletij vplivala na afriške kulture in sodobne raziskave kažejo, da so se sledi verskih predstav iz obdobja faraonov ohranile vse do danes med nekaterimi ljudstvi ob Nilu, v centralni Afriki in celo na zahodu kontinenta.

Schebesta je znal popularizirati svoje delo, saj je bil izjemno nadarjen za komuniciranje z javnostjo, ki jo je navduševal s pisanjem privlačnih poljudnih knjig in časopisnih člankov, s predavanji ob svojih fotografijah ter na koncu – s popularizacijo svoje privatne afriške zbirke. Na terenu v Kongu je uspel pridobiti več tisoč predmetov, ki jih je prinesel v Mödling in kasneje postopoma razdelil oziroma razprodal muzejskim ustanovam v Bruslju, Pragi in na Dunaju. Glede na sloves njegovih ekspedicij je razumljivo, da so se evropski muzeji zanimali za predmete z inventarnimi listki, ki jih je lastno-ročno izpolnil Schebesta. Strokovna in širša javnost dobro pozna njegove zbirke v omenjenih muzejih, manj znano pa je, da je del Schebestove afriške zbirke tudi v Sloveniji. Nimamo natančnega podatka, kdaj je zbirka prišla v Ljubljano. Lahko samo hipotetično sklepamo, da jo je prinesel oktobra leta 1933, ko je imel turnejo s predavanji. Iz misijonskih poročil je razvidno, da je bilo leta 1935 organizirano gostovanje potujoče misijonske razstave po različnih slovenskih krajih. Na razstavi so si obiskovalci lahko ogledali tudi 'pigmejske' predmete iz Konga. Schebesta je zbirko zelo verjetno podaril Ehrlichu, ki si je z njo morda pomagal na predavanjih, da je študentom predstavil materialno kulturo ljudstev, o katerih je že leta 1925 tudi sam pisal v *Bogoslovnem vestniku*.

Iz obstoječih virov ni jasno, kdaj je Ehrlich zbirko prinesel v Slovenski etnografski muzej, saj sta omenjeni dve letnici, 1940 in 1941. Prav tako viri niso enotni o tem, ali je zbirko podaril ali prodal. Zbirka še ni bila raziskana in objavljena, zato bomo za lažjo predstavo izpostavili le nekaj najbolj tipičnih predmetov, ki nazorno dokumentirajo značilno materialno kulturo ljudstev ob reki Ituri. Raziskovalce, ki raziskujejo zgodovino ljudstev v Kongu in predvsem antropološke raziskave Paula Schebeste, bo zbirka zagotovo zanimala, saj gre za selektivno izbrane predmete iz njegove velike zasebne zbirke. Še posebej je za raziskavo historiata zbirke pomemben podatek, da imajo skoraj vsi predmeti ohranjene inventarne listke z imeni predmetov, kot so jih uporabljali domačini. V večini primerov je dopisan pomen predmeta še v nemščini. Zanimivo je, da se na listkih pojavljajo po dve, tri ali celo štiri različne inventarne številke, ki so napisane z različnimi pisali. Verjetno je Schebesta predmete že na terenu popisal in oštevilčil, kasneje pa so jih ponovno oštevilčili še v Mödlingu in morda na koncu še v Ljubljani (mogoče v misijonskem muzeju v Grobljah?). Kot primer naj navedemo bodalo z leseno nožnico (sl. 42): na obstoječem originalnem listku je napis Nkundu/Boende – Messer (Ifaka), tri prečrtane številke (1, 19, 139) in številka (37), ki ni prečrtana. Številka 139 je napisana z enakim črnilom kot imena

predmetov. To je verjetno prvotna številka Schebestove zbirke. Stare inventarne številke omenja tudi seznam predmetov v zbirki na Dunaju.

Zbirki iz Ljubljane in Dunaja imata veliko sorodnih predmetov. Dunajski Etnografski muzej je od Schebeste kupil predmete šele po drugi svetovni vojni, leta 1950.¹⁴ Iz arhivskih virov je razvidno, da predmeti izhajajo iz območja Belgijskega Konga. Schebesta jih je od tam prinesel iz prvega in drugega potovanja. Že leta 1932, torej dve leti po vrnitvi s prve poti, je nekaj predmetov podaril muzeju. Z drugim potovanjem, v letih 1934 in 1935, je zbirko še povečal. Prvotno darilo se je leta 1950 spremenilo v odkup v vrednosti 12.000 šilingov. Poleg predmetov je Schebesta prodal tudi fotografije. V prihodnosti bo potrebna primerjava vseh Schebestovih muzejskih zbirk in arhivov na relaciji Ljubljana–Mödling–Dunaj–Praga–Sankt Augustin–Bruselj, da bomo lahko rekonstruirali časovno zaporedje zbiranja predmetov iz različnih ekspedicij v Kongo.

Schebestova zbirka Slovenskega etnografskega muzeja danes obsega 96 predmetov. Čeprav po številu zbirka ni obsežna, je vsebinsko zelo zanimiva zaradi širokega spektra načrtno izbranih predmetov, ki zajamejo osnovni prikaz glavnih dejavnosti vsakdanjega življenja domačinov v pragozdu Ituri. V zbirki so predmeti povezani z oblačili in krašenjem telesa. Posebno pozornost pritegnejo široki pleteni pasovi s prepletom v obliki različnih geometrijskih vzorcev in z velikim okroglim cofastim našitkom iz rastlinskih stebelc (sl. 25–27). S pasom so si ženske prekrile in okrasile zadnjico. Za en primer v zbirki pa lahko rečemo, da so takšen pas uporabljali tudi moški, saj na prvotnem inventarnem listku piše »Männnergürtel«, t. j. moški pas. Drugi način krašenja zadnjice je bil ponovno pas, na katerega je bila navezana ovalna blazina iz trave in iz širokih listov bananovca (sl. 28–32). V zbirki je tudi ozek predpasnik iz blaga, ki ima polno raznovrstnih našitkov, kot so gumbi, steklene jagode, polži kavriji in ovalno oblikovani obeski iz bakrene in železne žice (sl. 33–34). Zanimivo je tudi okrasje iz slame, ki ga je na zgornjem delu rok nosil vodja iniciacijskega obreda (sl. 35–36).

Bojevniki ljudstva Nkundu so se za svečane obrede popolnoma opremili z orožjem, okrasjem in s statusnimi simboli. Pri sebi so imeli veliko predmetov, ki jih najdemo tudi v Schebestovi zbirki Slovenskega etnografskega muzeja (sl. 37–45). Med njimi so omela, ki so služila kot dekorativni in statusni simbol, pas iz kože z dvema okroglima ploščicama iz medenine in železna bodala v leseni nožnici. Bodala so nosili obešena čez ramo. Ozek, lesen ščit

je predmet, ki ga ne moremo povezati z ljudstvom Bambuti, saj je ščit tako visok, kot je povprečna višina odraslega moškega. Kot je razvidno iz Schebestove fotografije, je podoben ščit nosil poglavar ljudstva Balenga, ob njem pa stoji njegov suženj iz ljudstva Bambuti (sl. 46–50). V zbirki je tudi več tipološko različnih sulic (sl. 51–53). Vpliv Evrope se lepo vidi na sulici, ki ima na jeklenem nosilcu sulične osti vtisnjen žig angleškega podjetja W. Marples & Sons (sl. 54). Sulice so bile dragoceno lovsko orožje in pomemben statusni simbol za moškega (sl. 23, 55). Priljubljeno orožje so bili tudi loki, s katerimi so streljali živali visoko v krošnjah dreves, s puščicami v obliki harpune pa lovili ribe v rečnih strugah. Lok s tanko, široko tetivo so uporabljali tudi kot glasbilo, saj so lok prislonili k ustnicam in pihali na tetivo (sl. 56–57). Pri streljanju z lokom so uporabljali posebne ščitnike iz črevesovine, v katero so nabasali suho listje, mah ali slamo (sl. 58–59). Poleg lokov je v zbirki ohranjen tudi usnjen tulec in več različnih vrst puščic (sl. 60–61). Med osebnimi predmeti sta zanimivi pleteni čepici: eno krasi perje in je na stalni razstavi Slovenskega etnografskega muzeja, druga pa je brez peres (sl. 62). Tudi dva glavnika sta lep pletarski izdelek (sl. 63–64).

Med okrasje telesa sodi še koščena igla s široko okroglo glavo, naglavni okras iz perja in rastlinskih vlaken; podobno so izdelani tudi okraski za ušesa (sl. 65–66). Nenavaden predmet je diadem v obliki polmeseca iz tanke medeninate plošče. Okrašen je s pikčastim tolčenim okrasom (sl. 67). H krašenju telesa sodi še komplet 25 zapestnic iz bakrene žice (sl. 68). Ljudje v pragozdu porečja Ituri so si telo krasili tudi z barvanjem in brazgotinjenjem. V zbirki so ohranjena železna rezila in igle (sl. 69). V gospodinjski inventar sodita kompaktno pletena vreča, koš iz lubja za prenašanje tovora na hrbtu in možnar. Na košu je obešena okrasna vrečka s slamo napolnjena lubja, ki ima dekorativni in magični zaščitni pomen (sl. 70–73). Schebesta je na več mestih pisal o glasbi in plesu domačinov. V njegovi zbirki je lepo ohranjena kalimba ter lesene citre (sl. 74–75). Da je Schebestova zbirka vsebinsko res zelo raznolika, pa na koncu potrjuje še 3 metre dolga kačja koža (sl. 76).

Kratek pregled Schebestove zbirke pokaže širok spekter predmetov, s katerimi je hotel najbolj nazorno predstaviti materialno kulturo različnih skupin ljudstva Bambuti. Čeprav je zbirka po številu majhnega obsega, ima izjemen pomen za preučevanje zgodovine slovenskih stikov z Afriko. Oktobra leta 1933 je Schebesta Slovence seznanil z neznanimi ljudstvi v pragozdovih Konga. Časopisi so o tem veliko pisali in več let sledili njegovemu delu. To

velja tudi za posameznike v teoloških krogih, ki jih je zanimala kulturna antropologija in predvsem zgodovina religije. Slovenski etnografski muzej je v novih prostorih leta 2006 odprl stalno razstavo z naslovom »Med naravo in kulturo«, na njej je med zbiratelji predstavljen tudi Paul Schebesta. V letu 2017, ko mineva 130 let od njegovega rojstva in 50 let od smrti, je Muzej krščanstva na Slovenskem v sodelovanju s Slovenskim etnografskim muzejem pripravil razstavo in to publikacijo v spomin na tiste čase, ko je bil Schebesta za Slovence Šebesta, za domačine ob reki Ituri pa – Baba wa Bambuti.

OPOMBE

- ¹ *Slovenec*, 18. oktobra 1933, str. 4.
- ² *Slovenec*, 20. oktobra 1933, str. 4.
- ³ *Slovenec*, 20. oktobra 1933, str. 4.
- ⁴ *Slovenec*, 24. oktobra 1933, str. 4.
- ⁵ *Slovenec*, 22. oktobra 1933, str. 3.
- ⁶ *Slovenec*, 8. novembra 1933, str. 6.
- ⁷ *Slovenec*, 8. novembra 1933, str. 6.
- ⁸ Novi list - El nuevo periodico, 16. december 1933, str. 6.
- ⁹ *Slovenec*, 27. oktobra 1933, str. 5.
- ¹⁰ Danes je to kraj Pietrowice Wielkie na Poljskem.
- ¹¹ Strokovne podatke o arhivu dr. Paula Schebeste je posredoval mag. Niels Hollmeier, znanstveni sodelavec univerze Heinrich Heine v Düsseldorfu (Die Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf). Za pomoč in izčrpne informacije se mu iskreno zahvaljujemo.
- ¹² Knjižici *Bambutu – pritlikavci ob Kongu* sta takoj sledili še dve z afriško vsebino. Pod zaporedno številko 15 je izšla knjižica z naslovom *Ob jezerih Srednje Afrike* in pod številko 16 z naslovom *Ruanda - Urundi*.
- ¹³ Martin Gusinde (1886–1969). Članek z naslovom »Tri mesece med pritlikavci« je objavil časopis *Slovenec* 4. novembra leta 1934 na strani 7.
- ¹⁴ Muzej se je takrat imenoval *Museum für Völkerkunde*, od leta 2013 se imenuje *Weltmuseum Wien*.

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96. EM 2959: Iz slame pletena čepica.



SLIKA 1:
Paul Joachim Schebesta (1887–1967).
FIGURE 1:
Paul Joachim Schebesta (1887–1967).



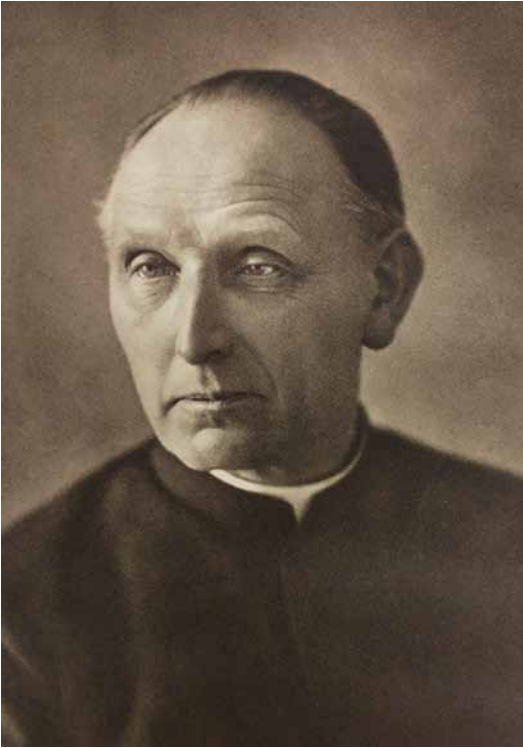
SLIKA 2:
Schebestov grob v Mödlingu.
FIGURE 2:
Schebesta's grave in Mödling.



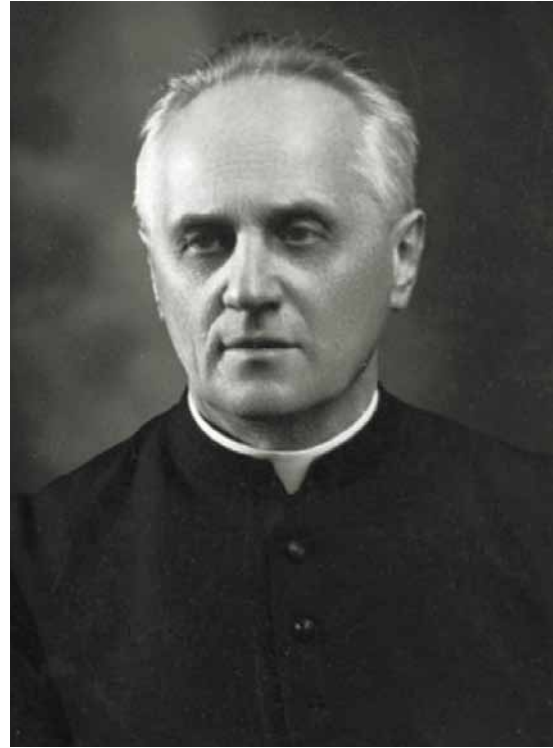
SLIKA 3:
Cerkev Sv. Duha v misijonskem središču v Mödlingu.
FIGURE 3:
The Church of the Holy Spirit in the missionary centre in Mödling.



SLIKA 4:
Notranjost cerkve Sv. Duha.
FIGURE 4:
Interior of the Church of the Holy Spirit.



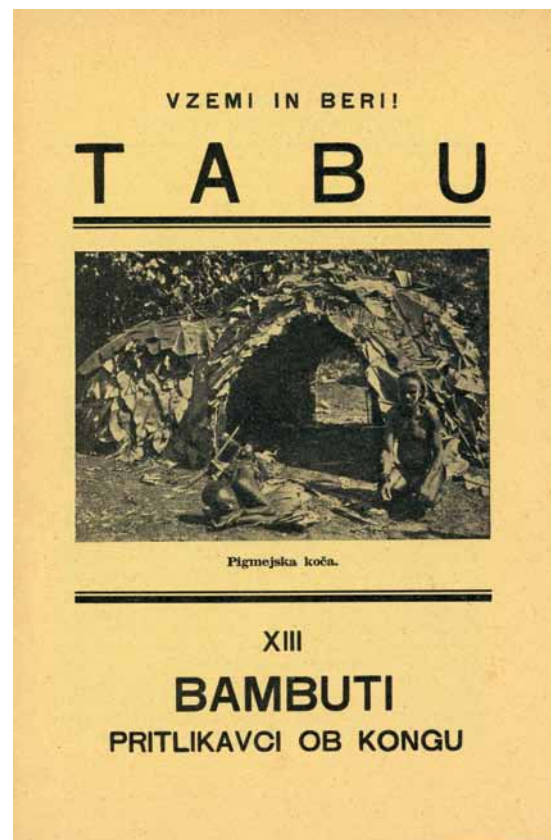
SLIKA 5:
Wilhelm Schmidt (1868–1954).
FIGURE 5:
Wilhelm Schmidt (1868–1954).



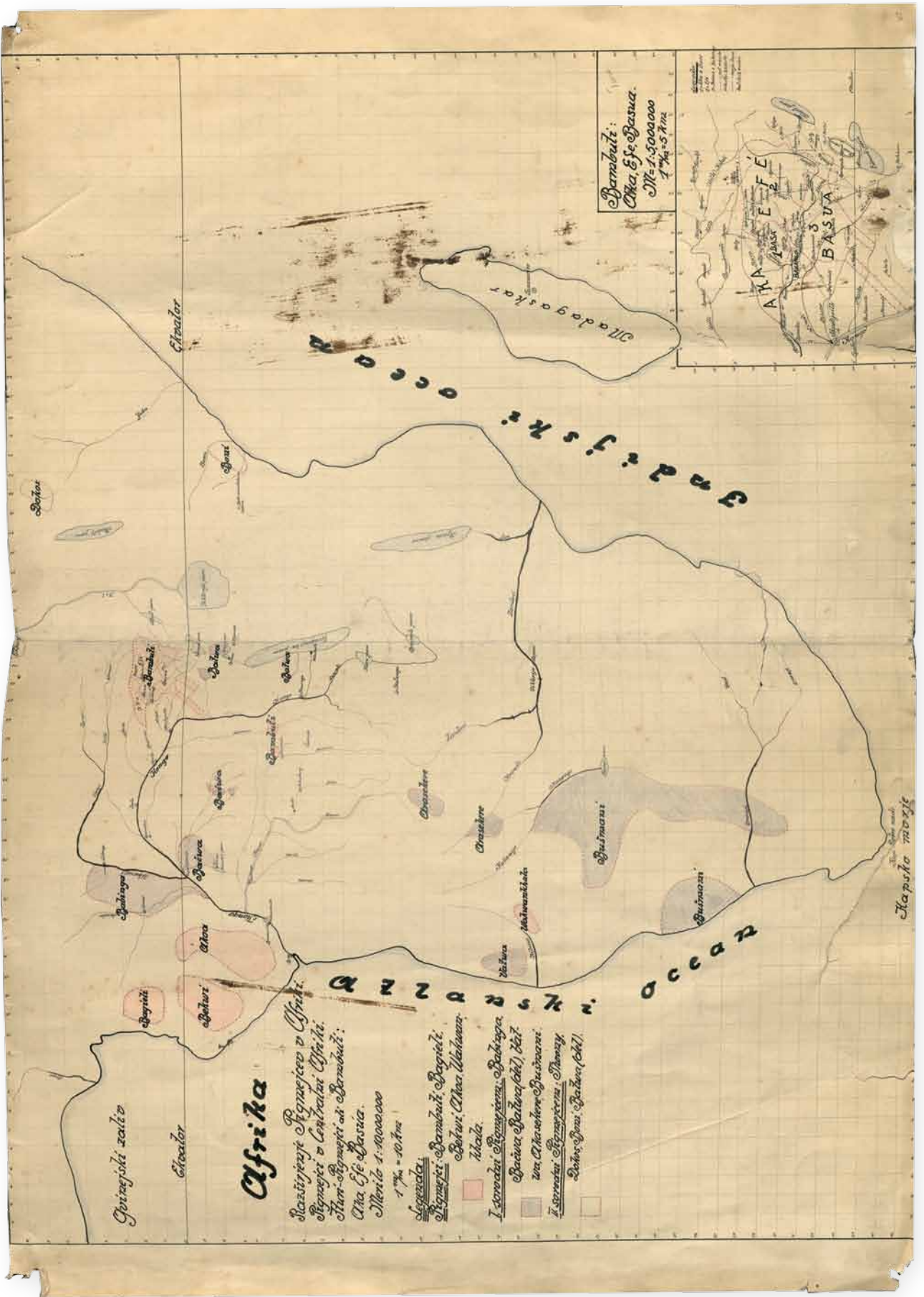
SLIKA 6:
Lambert Ehrlich (1878–1942).
FIGURE 6:
Lambert Ehrlich (1878–1942).



SLIKA 7:
Temeljna študija o ljudstvu Bambuti, ki jo je Schebesta objavil v treh delih.
FIGURE 7:
Schebesta published an exhaustive study in three volumes on the Bambuti people.

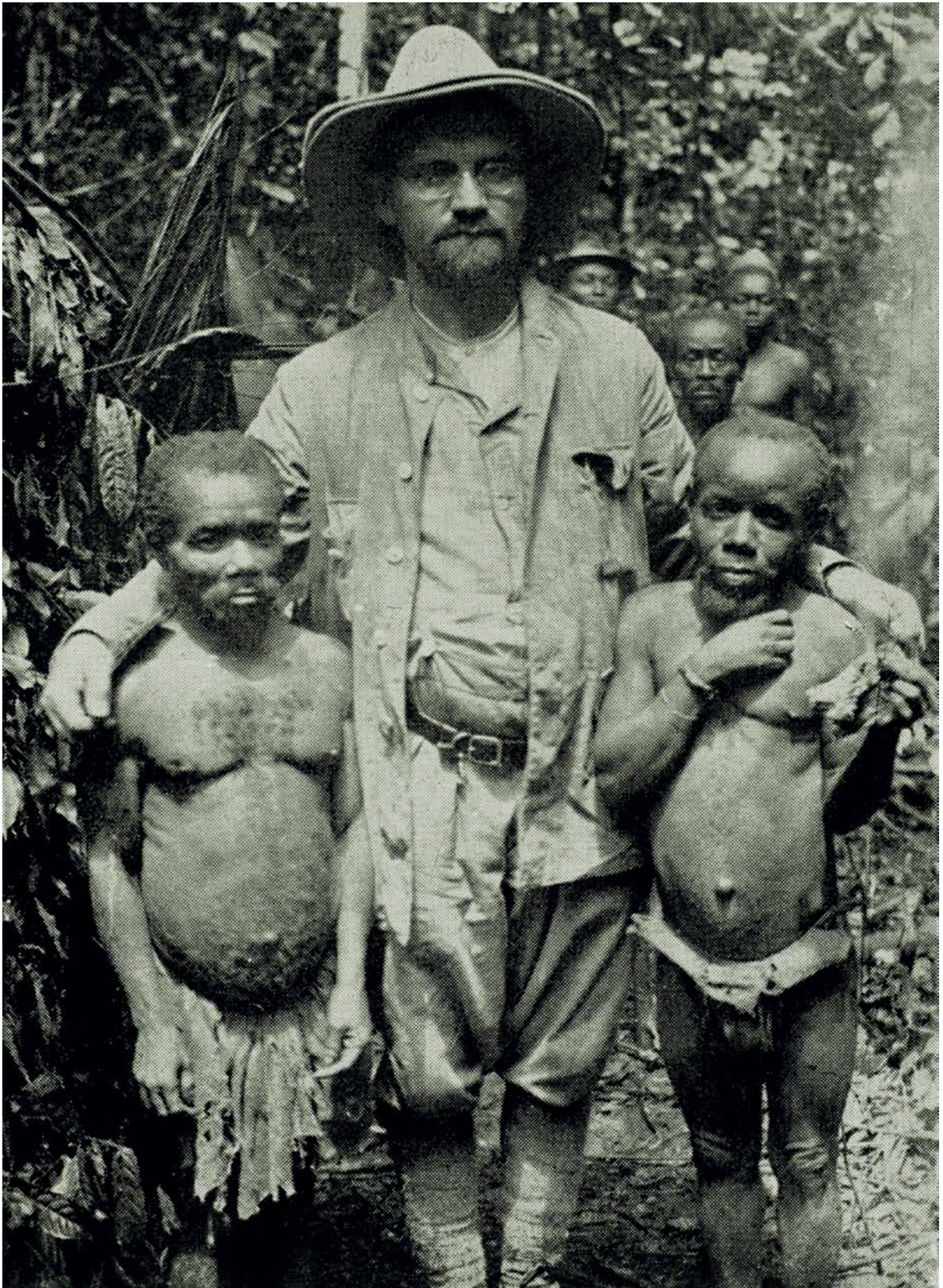


SLIKA 8:
Žepna izdaja knjižice z opisom Schebestovega prvega potovanja v Kongo leta 1929.
FIGURE 8:
Pocket edition of a booklet with a description of Schebesta's first travel to Congo in 1929.

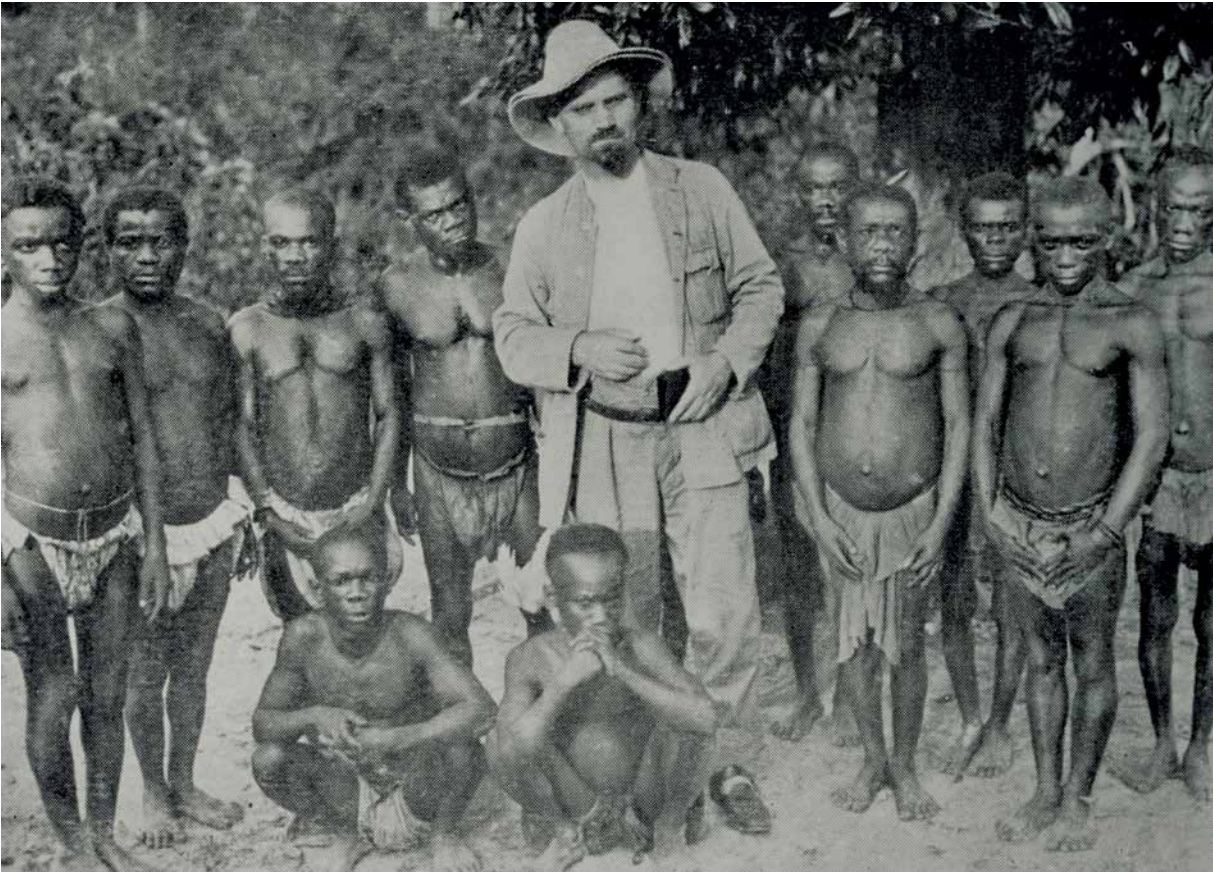


SLIKA 9:
 Na roko narisana karta območja z naselitvijo različnih ljudstev, ki jih Schebesta opisuje v svojih delih. Karto, ki jo hrani Nadškofijski arhiv v Ljubljani, je zelo verjetno narisal Ehrlich na podlagi Schebestovih objav.

FIGURE 9:
 A hand-drawn map of the area with the settlements of the different peoples Schebesta describes in his works. The map was most likely drawn by Ehrlich and based on Schebesta's publications. It is in the Archdiocesan Archives in Ljubljana.

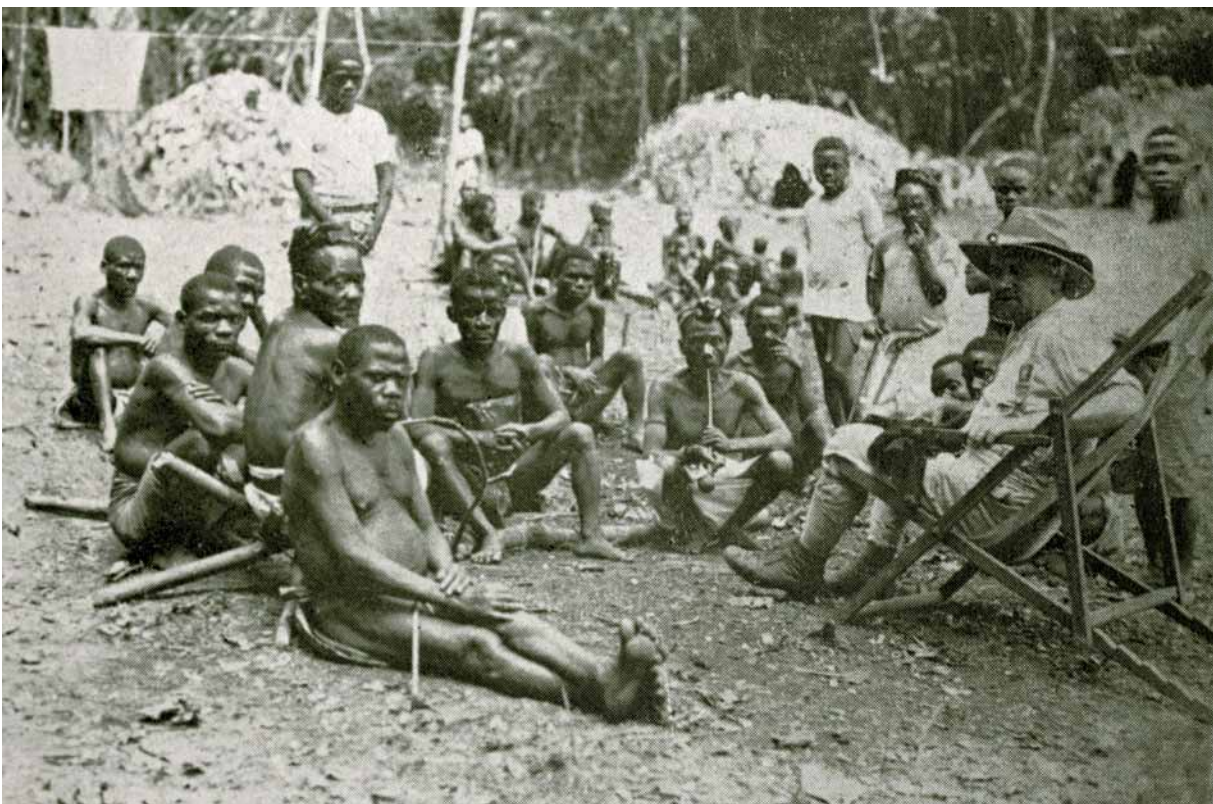


SLIKA 12:
Schebesta z odraslima domačinoma.
FIGURE 12:
Schebesta with adult natives.



SLIKA 13:
Schebesta med Bambutiji.

FIGURE 13:
Schebesta among the Bambuti.



SLIKA 14:
Schebesta v ležalnem stolu v pogovoru z Bambutiji.

FIGURE 14:
Schebesta in a deckchair talking to Bambuti.



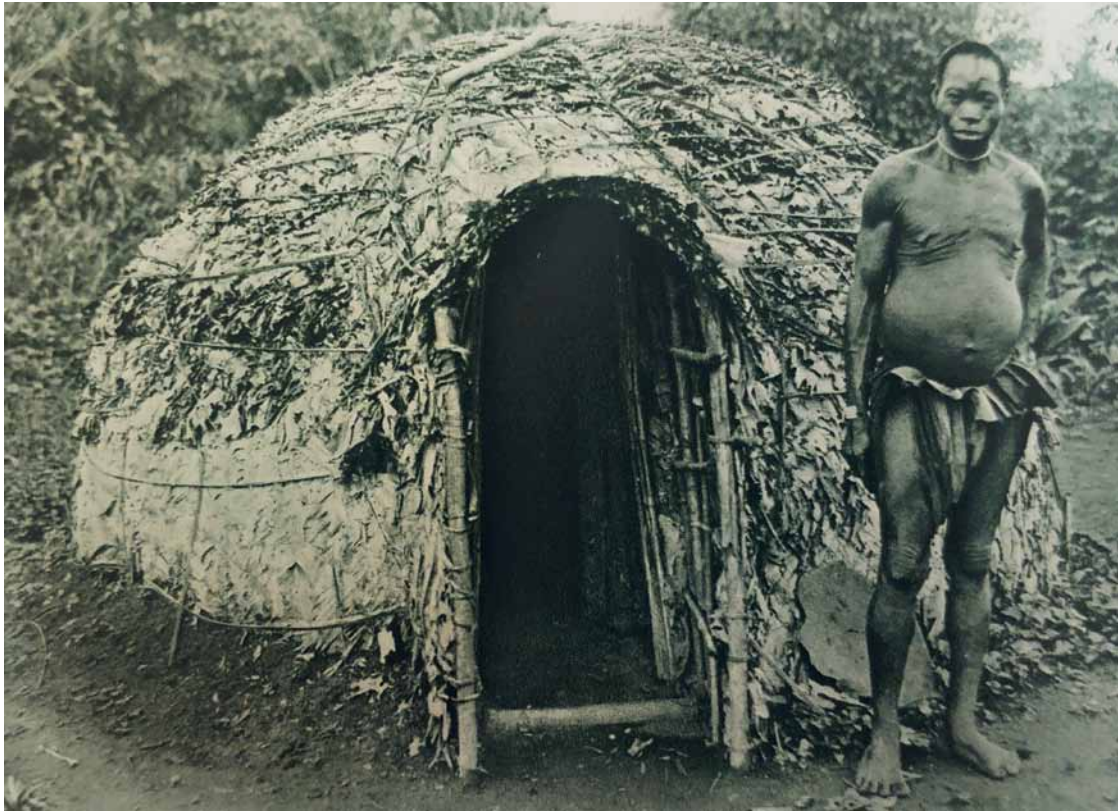
SLIKA 15:
Mož in žena pri kurišču pred kočo.
FIGURE 15:
Husband and wife at the fireplace in front of their hut.



SLIKA 17:
Družina.
FIGURE 17:
A family.

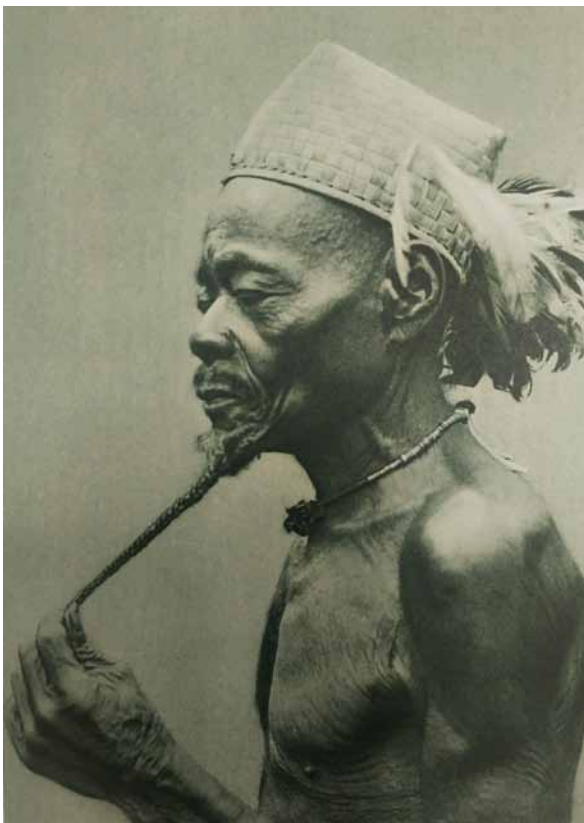


SLIKA 16:
Mlajši zakonski par.
FIGURE 16:
A young couple.



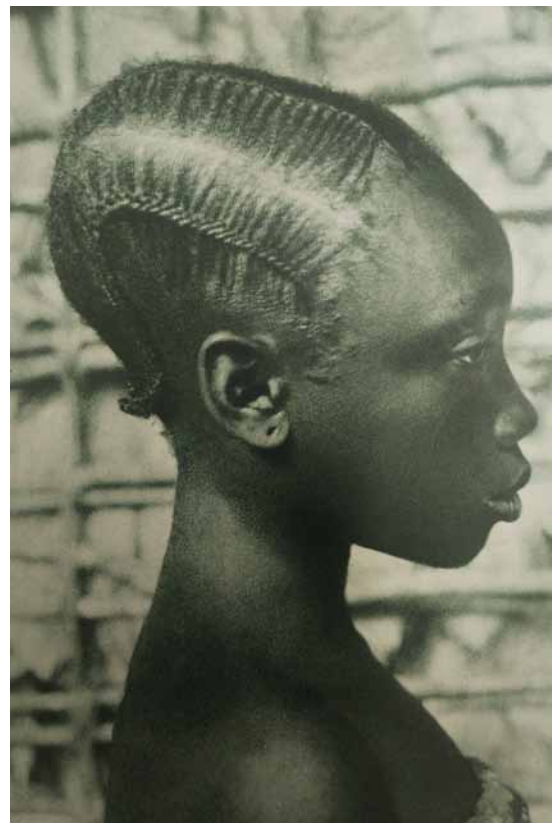
SLIKA 18:
Domačin iz ljudstva Balese pred koč.

FIGURE 18:
A native from the Balesse people in front of his hut.



SLIKA 19:
Domačin s pleteno brado.

FIGURE 19:
A native with a braided beard.

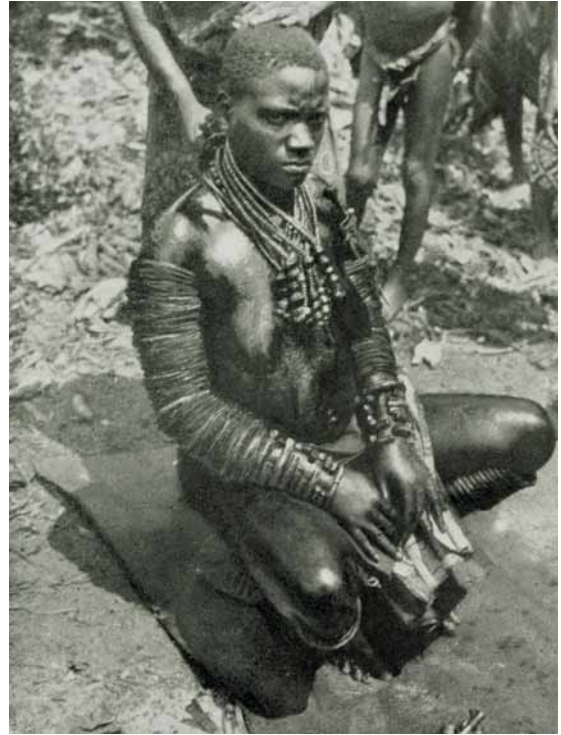


SLIKA 20:
Dekle ljudstva Medje ima s pletenicami urejeno pričesko.

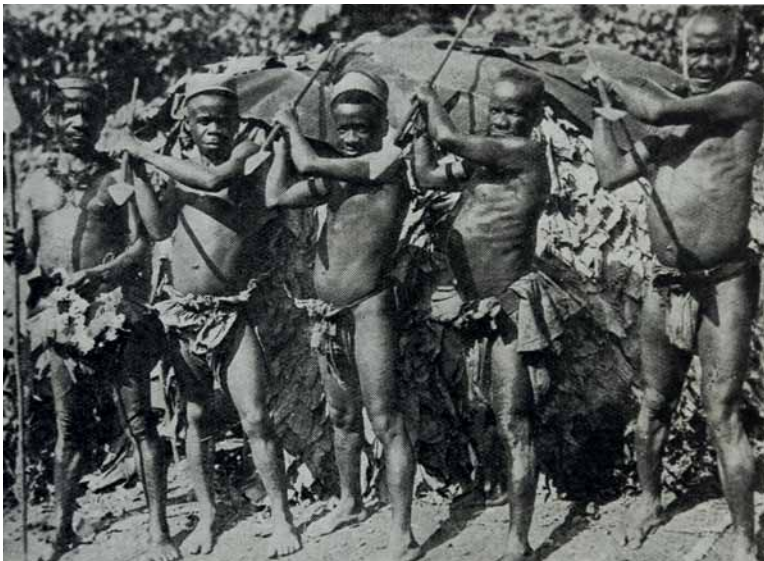
FIGURE 20:
This girl of the Medje people has a braided hairstyle.



SLIKA 21:
Vaški pevec poje ob spremljavi na harfo.
FIGURE 21:
Performance of a village singer accompanied by a harp.



SLIKA 22:
Mladič med iniciacijskim obredom.
FIGURE 22:
Young man during the initiation rite.



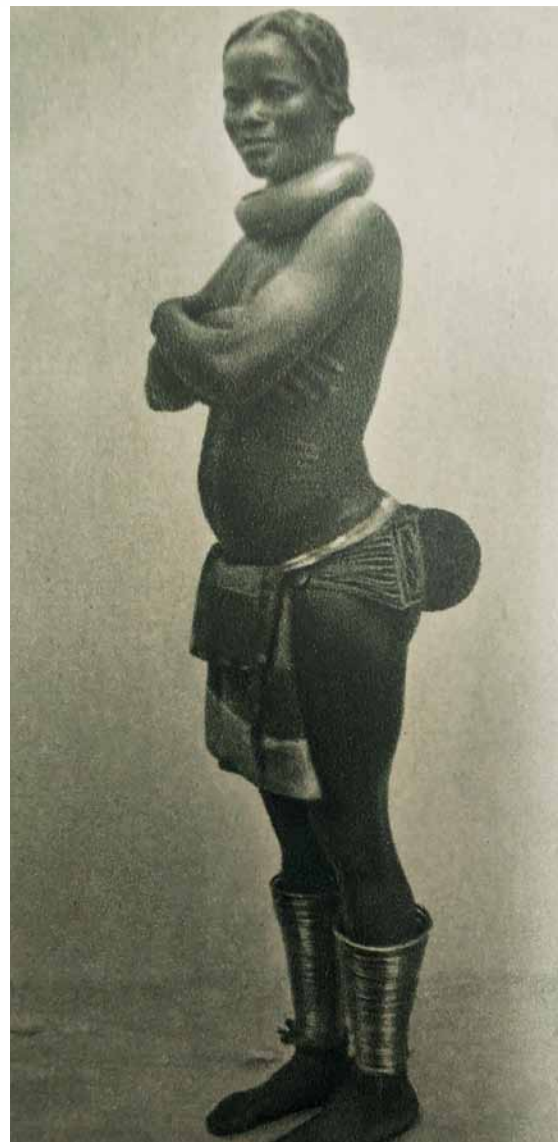
SLIKA 23:
Moški ljudstva Efe s sulicami.
FIGURE 23:
Men of the Efe people with spears.



SLIKA 24:
Kovač pri delu. Ob njem sta pomočnika,
ki z mehom uravnata temperaturo na
kurišču.
FIGURE 24:
A smith at work. His two assistants adjust
the temperature in the forge with a bellows.



SLIKA 25:
Okrasni pasovi ljudstva Nkundu.
FIGURE 25:
Decorative belts of the Nkundu people.



SLIKA 26:
Dekle z okrasnim pasom z izrazitim
cofastim okrasom.
FIGURE 26:
Girl wearing a decorative belt with a
distinct tassel ornament.



SLIKA 27:

Kvalitetno pleteni pasovi, ki jih krasijo veliki cofasti našitki.

FIGURE 27:

These high-quality woven belts are decorated with big tassel appliqués.



SLIKA 28:
 Zunanja stran ovalne tanke
 blazine iz prepleta palmovih
 listov.
 FIGURE 28:
 External side of a thin
 oval back apron made of
 interwoven palm leaves.



SLIKA 29:
 Notranja stran blazine
 z izrazitim izrastkom.
 FIGURE 29:
 Internal side of the back
 apron with distinct bulge.



SLIKA 30:
 Dekleta ljudstva Medje
 imajo zadnjice pokrite
 z dekorativnimi blazinami.
 FIGURE 30:
 The girls of the Medje people
 cover their buttocks with
 decorative back aprons.



SLIKA 31:
Pletena grba na zgornjem delu blazine.
FIGURE 31:
Woven bulge at the top of a back apron.



SLIKA 32:
Dekoratívna blazina iz slame.
FIGURE 32:
Decorative straw back apron.

SLIKA 33:

Sramni predpasnik iz blaga
in z različnimi okraski.

FIGURE 33:

Loincloth made of fabric and various
ornaments.



SLIKA 34:

Na sramnem predpasniku ima okrasje
apotropejski pomen.

FIGURE 34:

The ornaments on a loincloth have
an apotropaic meaning.



SLIKA 35:
Vodja iniciacijskega obreda.
FIGURE 35:
The leader of the initiation rite.



SLIKA 36:
Slamnati okras za roke.
FIGURE 36:
Woven-straw arm ornament.



SLIKA 37:

Pas iz kože, na katerem sta našiti okrasni plošči iz medenine.

FIGURE 37:

Skin belt with two round decorative brass plates sewn onto it.



SLIKA 38:

Bojevnika ljudstva Nkundu v popolni opremljeni, ki vsebuje veliko predmetov, ki so v Schebestovi zbirki Slovenskega etnografskega muzeja (bodalo, sulica, pas z okroglimi medeninastimi ploščicami, omela).

FIGURE 38:

Two warriors of the Nkundu people in full gear, including a lot of objects of the kind that are in the Schebesta Collection at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum (dagger, spear, belt with round brass plates, brush).



SLIKA 39:
Različne vrste omel, ki so jih uporabljali pri plesu.
FIGURE 39:
Different types of brush used in dances.



SLIKA 40:
Držalo omela je okrašeno s steklenimi jagodami.
FIGURE 40:
The handle of the brush is decorated with glass beads.



SLIKA 41:
Spiralno oblikovano držalo omela.
FIGURE 41:
Spiral-shaped brush handle.



SLIKA 42:
Bodalo z lesenim ročajem, železno klino in leseno
nožnico.

FIGURE 42:
Dagger with wooden hilt, iron blade and a wooden
sheath.



SLIKA 43:
Bodalo z lesenim ročajem in železno klino v leseni
nožnici, na katero je pritrjen usnjen pas.

FIGURE 43:
Dagger with a wooden handle and iron blade in a
wooden sheath, to which a leather belt is attached.



SLIKA 44:

Isto bodalo: rezilo je okrašeno z vrezi, glavič ročaja pa krasijo
bronaste zakovice.

FIGURE 44:

The same dagger: the blade is decorated with cuts, the pommel
with bronze rivets.



SLIKA 45:

Isto bodalo: trikotni okras z vrezanimi linijami.

FIGURE 45:

The same dagger: triangular ornament of cut lines.



SLIKA 46:
Išumi, poglavar ljudstva Balenga, s sužnjem iz ljudstva Bambuti.
FIGURE 46:
Ishumi, chief of the Balenga, with a Bambuti slave.

SLIKA 47:
Zunanja stran ščita, ki je dolg
139 cm in širok 24 cm.
FIGURE 47:
Front of a shield. It is 139 cm
high and 24 cm wide.



SLIKA 48:
Notranja stran ščita z držalom
iz enega kosa lesa.
FIGURE 48:
The back of the shield has a grip
made of a single piece of wood.



SLIKA 49:
Dekoratívni preplet in nosilni palici
na zunanji strani štita.
FIGURE 49:
Decorative interlace and the sticks
used to carry it on a shield's front.



SLIKA 50:
Leseno držalo je na štít pritrjeno z vrvico iz
rastlinskih vlaken.
FIGURE 50:
The wooden grip is fixed to the shield with a string
made of plant fibres.



SLIKA 51:
Širokolistni železni sulični osti.
FIGURE 51:
Broad iron spear points.



SLIKA 52:
Železna sulična ost s tulastim
nastavkom iz medenine.
FIGURE 52:
Iron spear point with brass
socket.



SLIKA 53:
Tul sulične osti je narejen iz
prepleta medeninaste žice.
FIGURE 53:
The socket of the spear point
is made of interlaced brass wire.



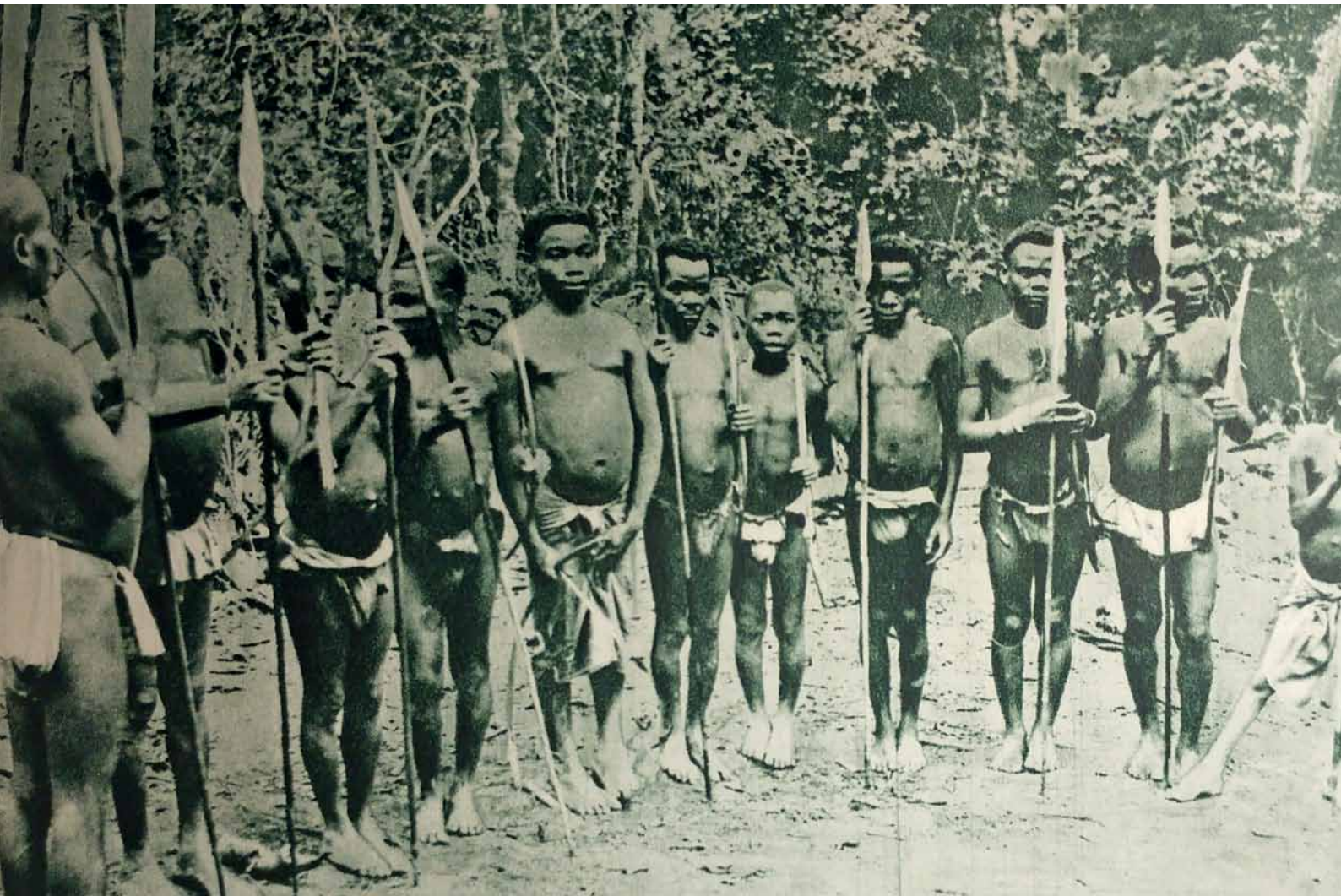
W. MARPLES & SONS

SLIKA 54:

Sulična ost, narejena iz sekundarno uporabljenega kosa jekla. Dolg vrat z okroglim profilom ima vtisnjen napis angleškega podjetja W. MARPLES & SONS, kjer so izdelovali jekleno orodje za mizarje, usnjarje, čevljarje in druge obrtnike. Za držalo sulice so uporabili cev iz medenine.

FIGURE 54:

This spear point is made of reused piece of steel. The long round spine features the imprinted name of the English company W. MARPLES & SONS, which produced steel tools for joiners, tanners, shoemakers, and other trades. A brass tube was used for the handle of the spear.



SLIKA 55:
Sulica je moškim pomenila orožje in statusni simbol.
FIGURE 55:
Spears were men's weapons and status symbols.



SLIKA 56:
Lok s tetivo iz rastlinskih vlaken.
FIGURE 56:
Bow string made of plant fibres.



SLIKA 57:
Zgornji lok ima privezan ščitnik za zapestje.
FIGURE 57:
The top bow has an attached wrist guard.



SLIKA 58:
 Ščitnik, narejen iz živalskih črev, ki so jih napolnili s posušenimi listi in na obeh koncih zašili z vrvicami iz rastlinskih vlaken.
 FIGURE 58:
 Guard made from animal gut, filled with dried leaves and sewn together with plant fibre strings at both ends.



SLIKA 59:
 Uporaba ščitnika.
 FIGURE 59:
 Using a guard.



SLIKA 60:
 Usnjen tul za puščice.
 FIGURE 60:
 Leather quiver.



SLIKA 61:
 Različni tipi puščic z izrastki v obliki harpune.
 FIGURE 61:
 Different types of arrows with harpoon shaped bulges.



SLIKA 62:
Pleteno pokrivalo.
FIGURE 62:
Woven headdress.



SLIKA 63:
Glavnik.
FIGURE 63:
Comb.



SLIKA 64:
Glavnik.
FIGURE 64:
Comb.



SLIKA 65:
Koščena igla.
FIGURE 65:
Bone needle.



SLIKA 66:
Zgoraj in desno dva okrasa za glavo, levo okrasek za ušesa.
FIGURE 66:
Top and right: two head ornaments; left: ear ornament.



SLIKA 67:
Dekoriran diadem iz medenine v obliki polmeseca.
FIGURE 67:
Decorated crescent-shaped brass diadem.



SLIKA 68:
Komplet zapestnic (25 komadov) iz bakrene žice. Na dveh
je steklena jagoda.
FIGURE 68:
Set of bracelets (25 pieces) made of copper wire.
Two of them feature a glass bead.



SLIKA 69:
Rezili in igla za brazgotinjenje.
FIGURE 69:
Scarification blades and needle.



SLIKA 70:
Kompaktno pletena vreča iz rastlinskih vlaken.
FIGURE 70:
Compact woven bag made of plant fibres.



SLIKA 71:

Iz lubja izdelan koš s pleteno vrvjo, na katero je obešen okrasni predmet v obliki vrečke, ki je narejena iz rastlinskega lista in napolnjena z mahom.

FIGURE 71:

Bark basket with woven string, to which a decorative bag-shaped object is attached, made of plant fibres and filled with moss.



SLIKA 72:

Lesen možnar.

FIGURE 72:

Wooden mortar.



SLIKA 73:
Lesen bat za možnar.
FIGURE 73:
Wooden pestle.



SLIKA 74:
Kalimba.
FIGURE 74:
Kalimba.



SLIKA 75:
Lesene citre.
FIGURE 75:
Wooden zither.



SLIKA 76:
Kačja koža.
FIGURE 76:
Snake skin.



*And there before me stood a jungle man,
a Pygmy, a representative of the fairy-tale tribe that
represents the most singular race in the world.
Paul Schebesta, 1929*

BABA WA BAMBUTI

The visit of the missionary and anthropologist
Paul Schebesta to Slovenia in 1933
and his African collection
at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum

In keeping with tradition, Slovenia once more celebrated “Missionary Sunday” this year. The main celebration was staged in Nova Gorica on Sunday, October 22, and the missionaries all over the world were remembered in all Slovene parishes. 84 years ago and on the same day, a big missionary celebration was staged in Ljubljana and its central event was a lecture held by the missionary and anthropologist Dr. Paul Schebesta from Austria (fig. 1). As a lecture, the event might not have attracted major attention, but its announced content was more than ideal for the newspaper reporters, who at once saw that their reports would have quite a sensational effect. The guest lecturer indeed intended to speak about African tribes, which everyone knew by name, but very few people knew who they really were. Schebesta lectured on the Pygmies, but not with boring data taken from encyclopaedias or various sources of European travellers. He instead lectured about his own experiences during his stay in Congo and brought to the missionary event his own field pictures, illustrating his lecture with black-and-white slides. The announcement that Schebesta would talk about and show pictures of his experiences and discoveries in Africa was among others taken up by the newspaper *Slovenec*:

“On Missionary Sunday, October 22, a great missionary event will be held at the Union Hall in Ljubljana. The main event of the programme will be a lecture with sciopic pictures, held by the internationally renowned ethnologist Father Paul Schebesta from St Gabriel near Vienna; numerous sciopic pictures will show us the life of central-African negroes and dwarves (Pygmies), who live in the rainforests along the Congo River. Schebesta himself made two expeditions, in 1929 and 1930, to the Ituri rainforest on the Congo River, whither the Pygmies had moved under pressure from other black tribes. Father Schebesta was

the first European who managed to live among the shy rainforest dwarves for a longer period of time, and learn about their way of living. His lecture on his stay among the Pygmies, their extremely primitive way of living, customs and traditions, as well as on his missionary activities, will be illustrated with sciopic pictures.”¹

Two days later, an unsigned reporter encouraged the readers to attend the lecture, as it illustrated the primitive stage of the African Pygmies, who in the first half of the 20th century were still living like the Europeans did in prehistory: *“At the missionary event in the Union Hall on Sunday night we will see original sciopic pictures of the oldest tribes of the human race, the African Pygmies, who represent the most ancient cultural race of mankind, showing us a true picture of the life and activities of our European ancestors millennia ago, when they lived in the prehistoric era.”²*

In other words, the reporter told the readers that Schebesta’s lecture would show the Slovenes a prehistoric picture of their ancestors, and make it easier for them to understand their own ancient past by viewing the Pygmies. The news item in *Slovenec* also tells us that the organiser prepared two lectures with entrance fees, and that tickets could be bought in advance at the Union kiosk and the Šoukal kiosk in front of the Diocesan Palace. Tickets for the first, Sunday, lecture cost 6 and 4 dinars for seats and two dinars for standing room. Schebesta held a second lecture on Monday, October 23, in the veranda hall of Hotel Union. It was announced as a *“scientific lecture about the Pygmies as the most ancient cultural race of mankind. The lecture will be illustrated with sciopic pictures and aimed in particular at intellectuals, who are interested in the issues of the oldest tribes in the world. Entrance fees: 5 and 3 dinars.”*

The arrival of the famous missionary and anthropologist in Ljubljana was a great event, and at the same time also an opportunity to organize lectures in other places as well. But things did not really work out as planned, since Schebesta had a very busy schedule of obligations and he confirmed a lecture in Celje on the eve of Missionary Sunday only at the last possible moment. Just one day ahead of the event, *Slovenec* brought the news: *“The famous researcher and missionary Father Pavel Šebesta [Paul Schebesta] will lecture in Celje as well. It was only yesterday that we managed to convince the famous scholar and missionary Father Pavel Šebesta [Paul Schebesta] to interrupt his travel from Vienna to Ljubljana and Celje, and to hold a lecture, illustrated*

with scioptic pictures, at the Hall of the People's Loan Society, presenting interesting facts from the life of the dwarf tribes from central Africa, the Pygmies, who live in the rainforests along the Congo River. The modest entrance fees - 4 dinars for seats and 2 dinars for standing room - will make attendance of this highly interesting lecture affordable to all and sundry."³

On Tuesday, October 24, the same newspaper published a brief report on the lecture in Celje, highlighting the following: "*Using numerous scioptic pictures, the world famous scholar Father Šebesta [Schebesta] presented a clear picture of the life of the dwarf Pygmies. The audience rewarded the lecturer with a long applause for his well-delivered lecture. Unfortunately, the lecture was announced too late, or many more people would certainly have attended it.*"⁴

Schebesta left Celje for Ljubljana on Sunday morning and immediately started to prepare his evening lecture at the Union Hotel. The Sunday edition of *Slovenec* presented the issues of the Pygmies briefly on page three, and also dedicated a few lines to Schebesta as a "*researcher of the dwarf (Pygmy) tribes*". The unsigned writer pointed out that Schebesta was a great expert on the Asian and African Pygmies, since he had lived among different peoples and had rich field experiences. The article emphasized concerns about the endangered situation of the Pygmies, and raised fears that the people would shortly vanish: "*The dwarf tribes, who live scattered across the most remote parts of the world (the Philippines and Andaman islands, Ceylon, central and south Africa, etc.) are gradually becoming extinct and ethnologists are aware that researching these tribes is one of the most urgent and important problems of ethnology, because with the demise of the Pygmies, the oldest representatives of the human race will vanish.*" The article announcing Paul Schebesta's lecture describes the physical features of the Pygmies and their dwelling culture in two sentences, while an extensive sentence describes their belief in a one and only highest being: "*A great sensation for the ethnologists was the fact that the Pygmies, wherever they live, believe in a single highest being, thus refuting with clear evidence the retrogressive and outdated theory that man originally lived in a "pre-logical", semi-dark state of mind, and that it was only after long eras had passed that he finally created a deity from primeval magic or by deifying natural phenomena.*"⁵

Schebesta's Ljubljana lectures on Sunday and Monday were a great success. Not only because of his superb rhetorical skills in German, but above all because of the enticing contents he presented to an audience eager to learn.

The first newspaper reports reveal that both lectures drew great interest, and that the famous anthropologist's visit hugely impressed the organizer and audiences. For more detailed information on the contents of his lectures readers had to wait until the first days of November, when the newspaper *Slovenec* published an unsigned article entitled "Life among the dwarves", and its subtitle revealed that it referred to the "Smallest and oldest human tribe". The writer's summary of the lecture shows that Schebesta started it with presenting his research among the Semang people on the Malacca peninsula and the ethnical groups on the Ituri River in Congo. Schebesta illustrated the lecture with his own field photographs, using them to draw attention to the differences between the Asian and African Pygmies. "*The Asian Pygmies have a darker skin colour. To date, it has not been cleared yet whether there is a genetic link between the Asian and African Pygmies. However, the Pygmies are certainly not degenerated descendants of tall races, but an independent branch of the human race, and we may say that they are the relatively oldest branch. It is precisely their ancientness that makes them so important to the cultural history of mankind*", wrote the author in *Slovenec*, emphasizing that their way of living and spare "cultural inventory" were indicative of their sheer ancientness.⁶

In his lecture, Schebesta presented the way of living in the rainforest, and it must have been quite interesting for the audience to learn that among the African Pygmies it were the women who built the small huts. Women made these temporary huts from bent twigs and branches, covering the structure with leaves and mosses. Such dwellings were finished in just two hours and their simple design was associated with their nomadic life, as they moved around to different hunting grounds, eventually returning to an abandoned settlement. Schebesta seems to have pointed out in particular the mutual relationships among the peoples on the Ituri River: "*Even though their material culture is extremely simple, they have a well-ordered social life. With very few exceptions, they live in monogamous relationships and raise their children to be good people. There is no evidence of any moral debauchery or wild relationships: the family is the social and economic unit, and there is a division of labour between husband and wife.*"⁷

Being a theologian and researcher of the origin of religion, Schebesta did not fail to emphasize in his two lectures in Ljubljana that among these peoples on the extreme edge of civilization there existed a belief in a single god, a highest being, whom they called Tore. The natives talked to him freely,

trusted him, and often asked for his help when hunting. There was no belief in spirits or witchcraft among them. Schebesta ended his lecture with a delightful summary: “*The delusions of evolution theories, stating a priori that man originally was without any higher ideas and that the sexes mated following their animal instinct, are now obsolete. The facts reveal quite the opposite. The Pygmies, whom we may consider a branch of the original human race and who withdrew into the rainforest to there preserve, in peace and seclusion, a virgin state of the most ancient culture, are perfectly moral beings, who possess all the essential abilities and qualities of rational man.*”

The above-mentioned article from *Slovenec*, published on November 8, was reproduced in extenso by *Novi list - El nuevo periodico*, a Slovene newspaper in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on December 16, 1933. The article was published under the title “*Interesting facts about the smallest human tribe.*”⁸

Leaving Ljubljana, Schebesta travelled to Zagreb, where he also held a lecture, and he interrupted his return to Vienna in Maribor. He held two lectures in the lecture hall of the Adult Education Centre on Friday October 27: one for the students, and a second one for the general public. The Ljubljana newspaper *Slovenec* advertised the lecture to its readers with the following words: “*This is the first time that the researcher, who is famous among Europe’s ethnologists, will lecture in Maribor on religion, life, and missionary achievements among the dwarves of Asia and Africa.*”⁹

Paul Joachim Schebesta was born in the village of Groß Peterwitz in Upper Silesia on March 20, 1887.¹⁰ After completing grammar school, he decided to study theology at the missionary centre of St Gabriel in Mödling near Vienna (figs. 3–4). Here, the Society of the Divine Word (German *Gesellschaft des Göttlichen Wortes*, Latin *Societas Verbi Divini*) had its seat. The society had its origins in a missionary order that derived from the Dutch place of Steyl, after which the society and missionaries were also called the Missionaries of Steyl (German *Steyler Missionare*). In addition to theology Schebesta studied linguistics and ethnography. Among his professors was the famous Dr. Wilhelm Schmidt, considered the greatest scientific authority on the research into the history of religions (fig. 5). Under Schmidt’s influence Schebesta developed a passion for studying the origin of religions and soon became his best student, who later had a remarkably successful scientific career. The greatest contribution to this career was his extensive field research in Africa and Asia. Following the example of his professor, Schebesta

systematically published the field documentation he created during his stay among the peoples on the Ituri River in Congo, and among the peoples in the rainforests on the Malayan Peninsula. He started his scientific career in Mozambique in 1911 and later, during the Second World War, researched the historical sources on the Kingdom of Mutapa, which extended over the area of southern Africa in the 15th century, in Lisbon, Portugal. After returning to Mödling, he was made responsible for the African section on the editorial board of the journal *Anthropos*, but in January 1924 already left for Malacca, in the south of the Malayan Peninsula, where he lived nearly two years among the Semang nomads. This expedition into Asia already suggested the direction of Schebesta's anthropological research in the years to come. As Schmidt's closest collaborator he intended to use his field research to substantiate the theoretical premises of his role model and his doctrine about the beginnings of religion, developed and furthered by a group of theologians and anthropologists at *Anthropos*. To search for the oldest religion in the world, or the very beginnings of belief, meant to travel back into the past with the help of peoples who lived in remote, hard to reach areas and who were not "contaminated" by external influences from other cultures.

Schebesta undertook several research expeditions in Congo and he was most attracted by the Bambutu (Mbuti) people in the rainforest on the Ituri River. His last expedition in Congo was in 1954-1955. After returning to Mödling, he dedicated himself to educational activities and lectures in mis-siology. He died on September 17, 1967 and was buried in the private cemetery of the Society of the Divine Word in Mödling, next to his professor Wilhelm Schmidt and collaborator Wilhelm Koppers. His numerous articles and books in German, English and Czech made him a leading expert in the world, as he had at his disposal singularly extensive field documentation on ethnology, cultural anthropology, and linguistics (fig. 7). The main body of his archives is today in the care of the Anthropos Research Centre in Sankt Augustin, Germany (Anthropos Institut, Die Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule SVD St. Augustin).¹¹

The Slovenes in general may have forgotten about Schebesta's visit and his lectures quite soon, but because of the themes he researched, he became increasingly popular, especially among theologians, and partly also with the general public. Schebesta had lived among people about whom stereotype ideas about a backward primitive species spread around the world,

about people who did not differ much from animals. His research activities refuted this negative image about the people who lived in the tropical rainforest of Belgian Congo. In numerous publications he systematically described their everyday life, their way of surviving, material culture, and above all analyzed their spiritual world. The latter was of great importance in the context of the search for the origins of religion, because theologians, philosophers, thinkers, and scientists of various disciplines had pondered for centuries the question when the first god appeared. Was he alone or were there more? Was it a he or a she? Perhaps, they were both ...

In association with his supporters from Mödling, Schebesta opened up new horizons in our understanding of the origin of religion, and he also found supporters in Slovenia. First among them certainly was Professor Dr. Lambert Ehrlich (fig. 6). As a professor of comparative religion at the Faculty of Theology, Ehrlich was considered to be the leading Catholic authority on missionary activities in Slovenia. He was a great expert on foreign cultures, their beliefs, magic and superstitions. Ehrlich detected in the works of Paul Schebesta attractive contents for the general public as well, and he therefore started an initiative to introduce the Slovenes to the Pygmy culture in Congo in greater detail by means of missionary publications: their spiritual world indeed expressed the beginnings of the oldest form of religion - the belief in a single god.

The missionary press was well developed in Slovenia in the inter-war period, publishing a wide range of journals and publications for different age groups. The Lazarists covered universal general missionary contents, publishing reports from all over the world; the Jesuits were famous for the superb organisation of their mission in Indian Bengal and wrote about it in special journals; and in 1 Metelkova Street a society supporting the missionaries in Africa operated. The society, led by female volunteers, was called the *St Peter Claver Society for African Missions* and it published numerous publications for children, youths, and adult readers. The popularisation of missionary work in the printed media was above all the responsibility of the Missionary Office at 2 Semeniška Street, where Ehrlich was the editor-in-chief.

Among others, the Missionary Office published the highly popular *Tabu* series, which addressed a very wide range of attractive contents from world history and geography. The series of small booklets, size 18x12 cm and containing around 36 pages, brought to its readers above all interesting and

instructive articles about foreign cultures, explorers, and missionaries. The pocket editions of these booklets were printed in Groblje near Domžale, the seat of the principal Slovene missionary centre, run exemplarily by the Lazarists.

In the 1930s, the editions in the *Tabu* series featured among others a booklet entitled *Bambutu – the dwarves on the Congo* (fig. 8). It was published as the series' volume no. 13, but without a year of publication. However, it is highly likely that it was published in the same year that Paul Schebesta visited Ljubljana. His book, entitled *Bambutu – Die Zwerge vom Kongo* (270 pages, 89 photographs, 3 maps), was indeed published by F.A. Brockhaus in Leipzig a year earlier. An examination of the book clearly reveals related contents and photographic material, which was of course much reduced and adapted to the size of the booklet in the *Tabu* series. Most probably, its text was summarized and written in Slovene by the editor-at-large Lambert Ehrlich. It is obvious that he had quite some difficulties in deciding what to leave out, and he endeavoured to include as much text as possible in the limited format of 36 pages. Among others, he renounced publishing a colophon and started the text right away on the inside of the frontispiece, finishing it on the inside of the back cover. He thus managed to have 34 pages of text, combined with five black-and white photographs. The photographs were copied from the above-mentioned German edition, and the captions of the pictures were translated literally from German, e.g. *Isumi, the chief of the Balenga and his vassal, a Pygmy = Ischumi, der Hauptling der Balenga und sein Vasall, ein Pygmäe* (fig. 46). It is possible that the map, which was most likely drawn by Ehrlich, was meant for this publication. The map was never published, but what it shows is the wider area of Congo in which Schebesta was active and the names of the ethnic groups in the Ituri Rainforest. The map has been preserved in the Archdiocesan Archives in Ljubljana (figs. 9–10).

Ehrlich explained in his introduction that Homer, Herodotus and Aristotle already wrote about the Pygmies, dwarves from Central Africa, and that the reports from Antiquity bordered on fantasy. The German explorer Georg August Schweinfurth, who travelled the area between 1868 and 1871, was the first to report in detail that they truly existed. “*It is from that time onwards that we encounter their name in the reports of various Africa explorers, who each discovered them anew. However, to date they have not allowed deeper insight into their life to anyone, just like the real dwarves,*” wrote Ehrlich, indicating how important a contribution Schebesta made, as he lived

among them for several months. Ehrlich also emphasized that Schebesta's travelogue pictured a very lively image of these smallest people in the world, who belonged to the oldest human race (figs. 12–24). The introduction on page 1 also tells us that the natives called him “*Baba wa Bambuti*”, which Ehrlich translates as “*Father of the dwarves*”, and on page 2, where he starts the description of life in Congo, Schebesta himself mentions the same title, translating it as “*Father of the Pygmies*”, adding “*I'm really proud of that name; it vindicates my achievements and is the most delightful reward for the countless efforts and hardships I have endured during my explorations.*” Schebesta later admits, however, that they also called him something less honourable, based on his skin colour: *Mucugu* (white man). The text of the booklet describes Schebesta's first travel to Congo, which lasted from January 1929 to September 1930.¹²

After his successful lecture tour in October 1933, Schebesta was an increasingly known figure to the Slovenes, as the media followed up his research activities long thereafter, reporting among others about the research he carried out in Congo together with Dr. Martin Gusinde, a collaborator from Mödling.¹³

Theologians, too, eagerly followed his achievements, especially his research into the history of religion. Following Ehrlich's interest, Vilko Fajdiga wrote lecture notes for the students of theology in 1963, entitled “*On the historical image of the oldest religion.*” Fajdiga, who defended his doctoral dissertation at the Catholic Institute of Paris, was an eminent expert on comparative religiology, and he was quite aware of the importance of the research carried out in Mödling. In the above mentioned lecture notes Fajdiga dedicated a 48-page-long chapter to Wilhelm Schmidt and his circle of collaborators. Among them was Schebesta, but also Paul Arndt, Martin Gusinde, Wilhelm Koppers, and Aleksandar Gahs. The latter is of particular interest as he left Mödling to return to his native Croatia, where he taught the history of religion at the Faculty of Theology in Zagreb.

Wilhelm Schmidt's theoretical knowledge was superb, but he was also well informed on the material culture of various peoples around the world. Pope Pius XI did not have to think long who would be the most appropriate person to set up a Missionary Ethnological Museum in the Lateran Palace in the centre of Rome (Museo Missionario-Etnologico). Schmidt was the director of this Vatican museum from 1926 to 1938. In his description of

Schmidt's anthropological school Fajdiga focused on the question of the existence of the Supreme Being and how the matter was addressed by theologians, anthropologists and ethnologists. The most important contribution to the issue was provided by Schmidt himself, who set out the directions for searching for the High God or Supreme Being in his major work in 12 volumes entitled *Der Ursprung der Gottesidee* (The Origin of the Idea of God), pointing out that: *"In my research and findings I have never relied on any world view, but always and solely on the ethnological and linguistic facts established by researchers of the most different directions and world views. The same is true and without exception of the belief in an almighty fatherly Creator among the most ancient peoples."* Schmidt emphasized the importance of the economic culture and social and economic conditions, in which primitive man lived, as he was aware that the economy and the role of ownership had a great influence on people's spiritual life, religions and morals. Schmidt set out his methodology for fieldwork to his collaborators with strict requirements, and Fajdiga summarises them as follows: *"The first requirement they had to strictly meet was an absolute ban on negligence and aprioristic research. Careless, fast collecting of ethnological material, gathered from all over, would be of no use. Every single expression of cultural life must first be described accurately in terms of its location and the conditions in which it was found. Then it has to be examined and described with the utmost care to try and explain it, based on the cultural environment in which it was found. How else would we be able to compare an individual expression of a culture (e.g. a tool, weapon, house, belief, family ritual, etc.) with an expression of the same sort from another culture, if the expressions or elements from both cultures are not accurately and comprehensively determined?"* This was the foundation of Schmidt's methodology, i.e. the criterion of form or the criterion of quality and quantity. Schmidt's efforts over many years led to his so-called theory of cultural circles (Kulturkreis) that was faithfully followed and further developed by his students in Mödling.

In his lecture notes from 1963 Fajdiga described the background and importance of the theory in detail, writing among others: *"Of course, establishing that a cultural complex is related or even identical to another, which may be far away, has extremely favourable consequences for getting to know the real image of individual cultural complexes. It is indeed quite possible that in the course of millennia one or another expression of culture from a certain complex becomes extinct, and that is very detrimental. But it can be rectified. The ethnologist will try to find whether perhaps another cultural circle, which the criterion of*

quality and quantity has established as of equal rank, has preserved that same expression. In that case, it is allowed without any fear to replace it with the same expression from an equal cultural circle." The theory became popular among archaeologists as well, who used elements of existing "ancient" cultures to reconstruct phenomena in prehistory. Ehrlich used the theory of cultural circles in his dissertation entitled *Origin of Australian Beliefs*, published in Mödling in 1922.

Fajdiga wrote a short summary of Schmidt's findings on the origin of religion and the features of the Supreme Being as it was known among different peoples studied by ethnologists and anthropologists in the late 19th century and first half of the 20th century. In the description of the Supreme Being he mentions several times what Schebesta had discovered in Africa and Asia, and because these findings were so important Fajdiga dedicated the second section of his lecture notes to an adapted translation of Schebesta's book on the origin of religion. Having obtained the author's permission, he translated over 60 pages of the book entitled *Ursprung der Religion*, which Schebesta published in Berlin in 1961. The book presents a wide spectrum of different forms of religion, mysteries, magic, and rituals. On the question about the origin of religion Schebesta wrote: "*Nothing can be stated about the origin of religion from the viewpoint of ethnology or archaeology, because we have not found living prehistoric people, and there is no way we can consider the existing primitive peoples as prehistoric people*". Concerning African notions about God the book often mentions a connection with the sun. The sun is God's eye, it is God who sees everything and who is omnipresent. "*He is like the sun. If I would know that there exists a country where people do not know the sun, then I would believe that these people know nothing about God,*" is the way Schebesta recorded the story of a native from Zambia.

The connection with the sun is interesting in the context of the monotheistic religion that was present in the oldest layers of ancient Egypt's spiritual world. Though it was later obscured by a polytheistic pantheon, the religion of ancient Egypt basically remained monotheistic throughout. It was the belief in the sun god Amun-Ra (Aton). The civilisation of ancient Egypt influenced African cultures throughout millennia and contemporary research shows that traces of religious ideas from the time of the pharaohs have been preserved to the present among peoples on the Nile, in Central Africa, and even in the west of the continent.

Schebesta was quite adept at popularizing his work as he was a brilliant communicator, who enthused the public with his fascinating popular books and newspaper articles, lectures illustrated with photographs and, last but not least, by promoting his private African collection. During his fieldwork in Congo he managed to acquire several thousands of objects, which he brought to Mödling, and later gradually gave or sold to museums in Brussels, Prague, and Vienna. In view of the acclaim his expeditions had gained, it is understandable that European museums were interested in objects with inventory labels written by Schebesta himself. His collections in the above-mentioned museums are well known to the professional and general public, but what is less known is that a part of Schebesta's African collection is kept in Slovenia. We have no exact data on when the collection arrived in Ljubljana. Hypothetically, we may surmise that the collection arrived in Ljubljana in October 1933, when Schebesta held his lecture tour. Missionary reports show that a travelling missionary exhibition was organised in several places in Slovenia in 1935. The visitors of the exhibition were able to view among others "Pygmy" objects from Congo. Schebesta most likely donated the collection to Ehrlich, who may have used it in his lectures to present to his students the material culture of peoples on which he wrote himself in *Bogoslovni vestnik* (Theological Journal) as early as 1925.

The existing sources do not reveal when Ehrlich transferred the collection to the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, since two dates are mentioned – 1940 and 1941. And the sources also disagree on whether he sold or donated the collection to the museum. The collection has not been researched and published yet, and to give a better idea of it, we will highlight only a few typical objects, which beautifully document the typical material culture of the peoples on the Ituri River. Researchers exploring the history of the peoples in the Congo and especially Paul Schebesta's anthropological research will certainly be interested in the collection, as it consists of selected objects from his huge private collection. For the research of the history of the collection an important data is that nearly all objects are equipped with inventory labels, featuring the names of the objects the natives used. On most of them the names of the objects are added in German. Interestingly, the labels show two, three, or even four different inventory numbers, written with different pens. Schebesta probably inventoried and numbered the objects in the field, they were later renumbered in Mödling, and perhaps finally once more in Ljubljana (at the missionary museum in Groblje?). Take for example the dagger with wooden sheath (fig. 42): the preserved original label

shows the inscription Nkundu/Boende – Messer (Ifaka), three crossed-out numbers (1, 19, 139), and one number that is not crossed out (37). The number 139 is written in the same ink as the names of the objects. It is therefore probably the original number of Schebesta's collection. The old inventory numbers are also mentioned in the list of objects in the Vienna collection.

The collection in Ljubljana has many objects similar to those in the Vienna collection. The Ethnographic Museum in Vienna purchased objects from Schebesta only after the Second World War – in 1950.¹⁴ Archive sources reveal that the objects are from the area of Belgian Congo. Schebesta brought them with him from his first and second expeditions. In 1932, two years after returning from his first travel to Congo, he gave several objects on loan to the museum. His second expedition in 1934–35 further expanded his collection. The original loan was changed into a purchase worth 12,000 Schilling in 1950. In addition to objects, Schebesta also sold photographs. In the future it will be necessary to make a comparison of all Schebesta's museum collections and archives in Ljubljana, Mödling, Vienna, Prague, Sankt Augustin, and Brussels, to reconstruct the temporal sequence of the objects collected during his individual expeditions to Congo.

The Schebesta Collection at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum consists of 96 objects. Though it is not a big collection by the number of objects, its contents are very interesting because of the diversity of systematically collected objects, providing a basic presentation of the principal activities in the everyday life of the natives in the Ituri rainforest. The collection contains objects connected with clothes and body decoration. Particular attention deserve the wide woven belts with interlaces in the form of different geometric patterns and an attached big round tassel, made of plant stalks (figs. 25–27). Women used these belts to cover and decorate their buttocks. One specimen in the collection suggests that men, too, wore such belts, as the original inventory label reads *Männnergürtel*, i.e. men's belt. Another way of decorating one's buttocks was again a belt, to which an oval back apron made of grass and wide banana leaves was attached (figs. 28–32). The collection further includes a narrow apron made of cloth with a wealth of appliqués: buttons, glass beads, cowrie shells, and oval pendants made of copper and iron wire (figs. 33–34). Another interesting item is a straw ornament, worn on the upper arm by the leader of the initiation rite (figs. 35–36).

The warriors of the Nkundu people were fully equipped with weapons, ornaments and status symbols in the ceremonial rituals. They carried many objects of the kind that are in Schebesta's collection at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum (figs. 37–45). Among them is a brush that served as a decorative and status symbol, a skin belt with two round brass plates, and iron daggers in wooden sheaths. The daggers hung on a shoulder strap. A narrow, wooden shield is an object that we cannot connect with the Bambuti, because it is as high as an average adult Bambuti man. As we can see from Schebesta's photograph, a similar shield was carried by the chief of the Balenga people, accompanied in the picture by his Bambuti slave (figs. 46–50). The collection further contains spears of different typologies (figs. 51–53). A European influence is obvious from a spear that has the imprinted stamp of the English company W. Marples & Sons on the steel socket of the spear point (fig. 54). Spears were precious hunting weapons and important status symbols to men (figs. 23, 55). Another popular weapon was the bow, used to shoot at animals high up in the tree crowns, or fish in riverbeds with harpoon arrows. A bow with a thin, wide string is also used as a musical instrument: they press the bow against the lips and blow the string (figs. 56–57). When shooting a bow, a special wrist guard was used, made of gut and filled with dry leaves, moss, or straw (figs. 58–59). Besides bows, the collection contains a leather quiver and several types of arrows (figs. 60–61). Among the personal objects are two interesting woven caps: one is decorated with feathers and features in the permanent exhibition of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, while the second one is without feathers (fig. 62). The two combs are beautiful woven products (figs. 63–64).

Body ornaments include a bone needle with a wide round head, and a head ornament made of feathers and plant fibres; the ear ornaments are similarly made (figs. 65–66). An unusual object is a crescent-shaped diadem made of a thin brass plate. It is decorated with a dotted hammered ornament (fig. 67). Body ornaments include a set of 25 bracelets made of copper wire (fig. 68). The people in the rainforest of the Ituri river basin decorated their bodies also with dyes and scarification. The collection contains iron blades and needles (fig. 69). To the household inventory belong a compact woven bag, and a piece of bark used as a basket to carry loads on one's back and a mortar. A decorative bark bag is attached to the basket, filled with straw, and it has a decorative as well as magic protection meaning (figs. 70–73). Schebesta wrote in several places on the music and dances of the natives. Part of his collection are a well-preserved *kalimba*, and a wooden zither

(figs. 74–75). That the contents of the Schebesta Collection are indeed very varied is also confirmed by the 3.0 m long snake skin (fig. 76).

This short overview of the Schebesta collection shows a wide range of objects with which he wanted to illustrate the material culture of different Bambuti groups. Though a small collection, it is of great importance for the study of the history of the contacts of Slovenes with Africa. Schebesta introduced the Slovenes to unknown peoples from the rainforest of Congo in October 1933. His lectures received great coverage in the newspapers and they followed up on his work for several years. The same is true of individuals in theological circles, who were interested in cultural anthropology and especially in the history of religion. When the Slovene Ethnographic Museum moved to its new premises, it opened a permanent exhibition entitled *Between Nature and Culture* in 2006, and included Paul Schebesta among the presented collectors. In 2017, 130 years after his birth and 50 years after his death, the Slovene Museum of Christianity prepared, in cooperation with the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, an exhibition and the present publication in memory of the times when Schebesta was Šebesta to the Slovenes, and when the natives on the Ituri River had their own name for him - Baba wa Bambuti.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ *Slovenec*, October 18, 1933, p. 4.
- ² *Slovenec*, October 20, 1933, p. 4.
- ³ *Slovenec*, October 20, 1933, p. 4.
- ⁴ *Slovenec*, October 24, 1933, p. 4.
- ⁵ *Slovenec*, October 22, 1933, p. 3.
- ⁶ *Slovenec*, November 8, 1933, p. 6.
- ⁷ *Slovenec*, November 8, 1933, p. 6.
- ⁸ Novi list – El nuevo periodico, December 16, 1933, p. 6.
- ⁹ *Slovenec*, October 27, 1933, p. 5.
- ¹⁰ Today Pietrowice Wielkie in Poland.
- ¹¹ The professional data on the archives of Dr. Paul Schebesta was provided to us courtesy of Niels Hollmeier, MA, a scientific collaborator of the Heinrich-Heine University in Düsseldorf. We wish to thank him most sincerely for his assistance and exhaustive information.
- ¹² The booklet *Bambutu – pritlikavci ob Kongu* (Bambutu – the dwarves on the Congo) was followed right away by two more with African contents. Consecutive number 15 was a booklet entitled *Ob jezerih Srednje Afrike* (On the lakes of Central Africa) and no. 16 was entitled *Ruanda - Urundi*.
- ¹³ Martin Gusinde (1886–1969). The article entitled *Three months among the dwarves* was published on page 7 of the newspaper *Slovenec* on November 4, 1934.
- ¹⁴ The museum was then called *Museum für Völkerkunde*, it was renamed *Weltmuseum Wien* in 2013.

BASIC INVENTORY OF THE OBJECTS

1. EM 2864: Dagger with wooden hilt and iron blade, in a wooden sheath with an attached leather belt.
2. EM 2865: Dagger with wooden hilt and iron blade, in a wooden sheath with an attached string for carrying.
3. EM 2866: Shield made of interwoven thin sticks and plant fibres with a carved handle plate, made of a single piece of wood and fixed to two vertical parallel sticks.
4. EM 2867: Wooden bow.
5. EM 2868: Arrow with harpoon on a string.
6. EM 2869: Wooden bow.
7. EM 2870: Arrow with harpoon on a string.
8. EM 2871: Wooden bow wrapped in leaves.
9. EM 2872: Harpoon.
10. EM 2873: Wooden bow and four arrows.
11. EM 2874: Wooden bow.
12. EM 2875: Wooden bow, leather-covered in two places.
13. EM 2876: Wrist guard in the form of a full bellows.
14. EM 2877: Wooden bow.
15. EM 2878: Leather quiver with 23 arrows.
16. EM 2879: Wooden arrow with iron point.
17. EM 2880: Wooden arrow with iron point.
18. EM 2881: Wooden arrow with iron point.
19. EM 2882: Wooden spear with iron point.
20. EM 2883: Wooden spear with iron point.
21. EM 2884: Spear with iron point on a brass holder.
22. EM 2885: Wooden spear with iron point.
23. EM 2886: Wooden spear with iron point.

24. EM 2887: Wooden spear with iron point.
25. EM 2888: Wooden spear with iron point.
26. EM 2889: Stick – wooden sceptre.
27. EM 2890: Tool with wooden handle and iron extension, similar to a small sickle.
28. EM 2891: Iron scarification blade.
29. EM 2892: Iron scarification blade.
30. EM 2893: Iron scarification blade.
31. EM 2894: Iron scarification blade.
32. EM 2895: Iron needle for tattooing and scarification.
33. EM 2896: Iron needle for tattooing and scarification.
34. EM 2897: Iron needle for tattooing and scarification.
35. EM 2898: Wooden comb with 15 tied sticks.
36. EM 2899: Wooden comb with 14 tied sticks.
37. EM 2900: Brush used as a decorative requisite in dances.
38. EM 2901: Brush used as a decorative requisite in dances.
39. EM 2902: Brush used as a decorative requisite in dances.
40. EM 2903: Brush used as a decorative requisite in dances.
41. EM 2904: Brush used as a decorative requisite in dances.
42. EM 2905: Wooden frame made of sticks tied with a string
43. EM 2906: Straw mat.
44. EM 2907: Straw mat.
45. EM 2908: Woven body ornament.
46. EM 2909: Woven body ornament.
47. EM 2910: Head ornament.
48. EM 2911: Raffia bag.
49. EM 2912: Raffia bag.
50. EM 2913: Raffia bag.
51. EM 2914: Heart-shaped piece of cardboard covered in silk.
52. EM 2915: Decorative object made of cardboard.
53. EM 2916: Round ivory plate.
54. EM 2917: Ivory needle with horizontal flat head.

55. EM 2918: Bent ivory needle.
56. EM 2919: Wooden mortar.
57. EM 2920: Wooden pestle.
58. EM 2921: Stick for playing percussion.
59. EM 2922: Vessel with tree bark lid.
60. EM 2923: Woven basket.
61. EM 2924: Tree bark basket with straw interlaces.
62. EM 2925: Brush.
63. EM 2926: Woven straw bag.
64. EM 2927: Woven string bag.
65. EM 2928: Straw mat.
66. EM 2929: Leather belt.
67. EM 2930: Leather belt.
68. EM 2931: Leather belt with two round brass sheet plates.
69. EM 2932: Men's woven leaf belt.
70. EM 2933: Women's wide woven-straw belt with round tassel ornament.
71. EM 2934: Women's wide woven-straw belt with round tassel ornament.
72. EM 2935: Women's woven-straw belt.
73. EM 2936: Plant-fibre head ornament worn in ritual dances.
74. EM 2937: Plant-fibre head ornament worn in ritual dances.
75. EM 2938: Round woven plate.
76. EM 2939: Round woven plate with a six point star pattern.
77. EM 2940: Animal hide.
78. EM 2941: Belt for grown-up girls, made of straw and palm leaves.
79. EM 2942: Belt for grown-up girls, made of straw and palm leaves.
80. EM 2943: Woven straw cap with feather bunch.
81. EM 2944: Woven straw cap.
82. EM 2945: Women's apron with various decorative pendants made of copper, iron, cowrie shells, glass beads and buttons.
83. EM 2946: Ear ornament with tied plant fibres in the form of a brush.
84. EM 2947: Raffia bundle.
85. EM 2948: Brass head ornament in the form of a moon quarter.

86. EM 2949: Set of tied bracelets (25) made of spiral copper wire. Two bracelets feature an attached white glass bead.
87. EM 2950: Five iron bracelets.
88. EM 2951: Iron bracelet.
89. EM 2952: Iron bracelet.
90. EM 2953: Wooden zither with twelve plant-fibre strings (originally 15 strings).
91. EM 2954: Kalimba with wooden resonating base to which eight iron tines are fixed. The wooden case's long sides are decorated.
92. EM 2955: Crocodile hide (1.35 m).
93. EM 2956: Snake hide (3.0 m).
94. EM 2957: Wrist guard in the form of a pouch.
95. EM 2958: Men's wide woven-straw belt with round tassel ornament.
96. EM 2959: Woven straw cap.

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VIRI SLIKOVNEGA GRADIVA SOURCES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

2–4; 7–8; 25; 27–29; 31–34; 36–37; 39–45; 47–54; 56–58; 60–76 - Slovenski etnografski muzej, fotografiral Marko Frelih / Slovene Ethnographic Museum, photo Marko Frelih.

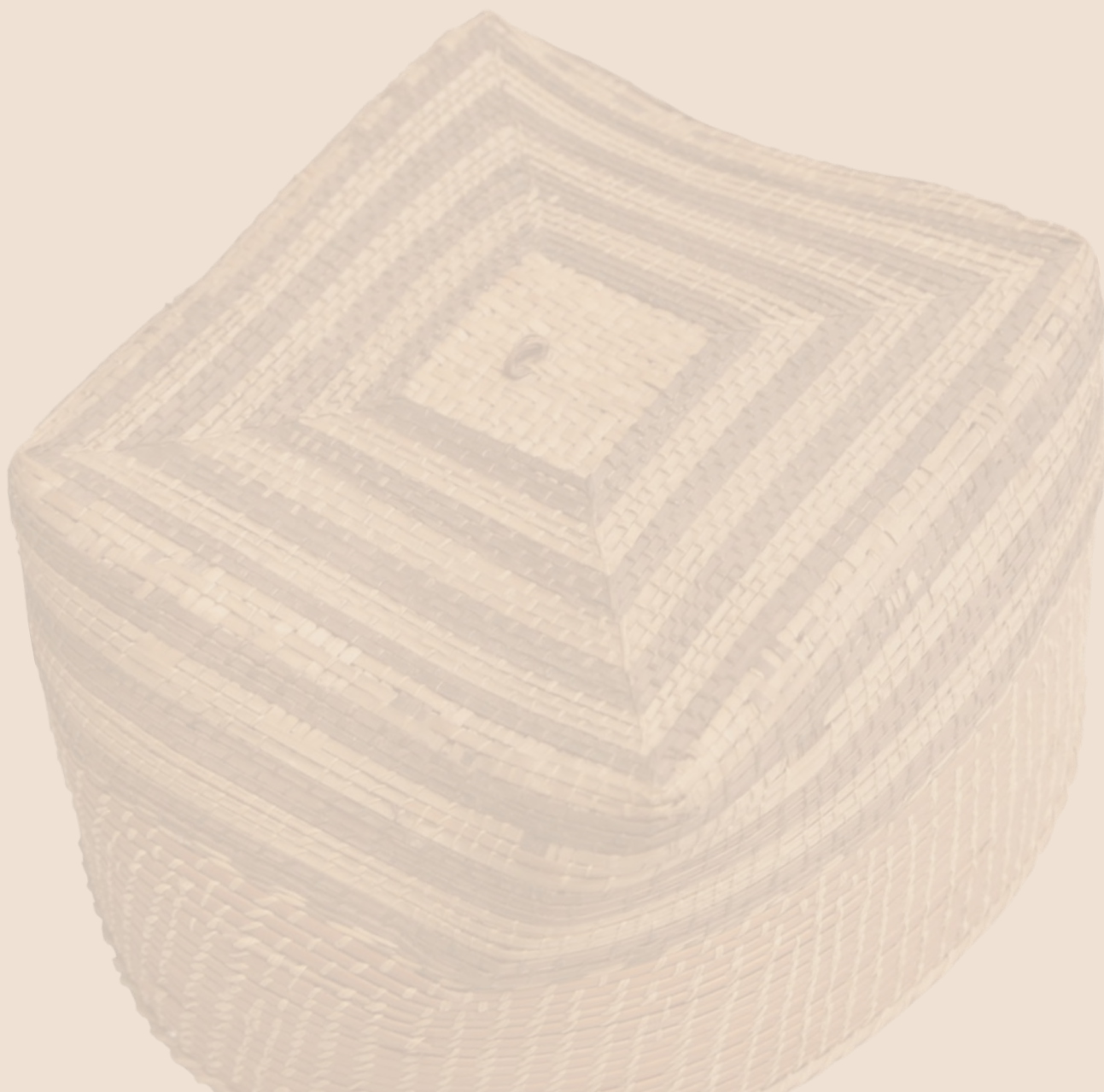
12–24; 26; 30; 35; 38; 46; 55; 59 - Paul Schebesta (Glej literaturo/See bibliography: SCHEBESTA 1932; SCHEBESTA 1936; SCHEBESTA 1938-1941).

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1 - FESTSCHRIFT PAUL SCHEBESTA 1963.

5 - FESTSCHRIFT WILHELM SCHMIDT 1928.

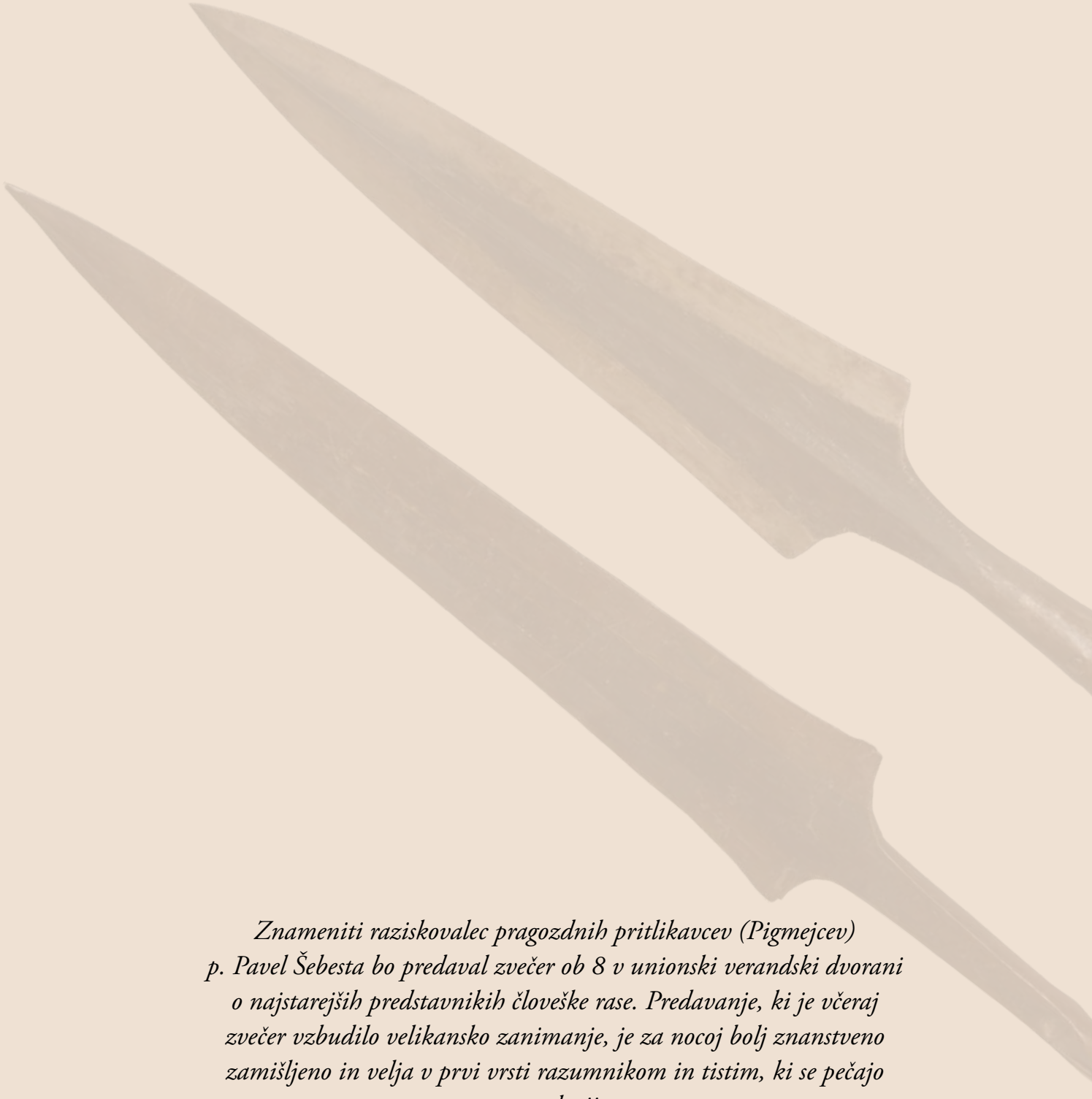


Drevi bomo v Unionu videli zastopnike najstarejših plemen na svetu – pritlikave Pigmejce iz osrednje Afrike. Znani raziskovalec teh plemen, p. Pavel Šebesta, nam bo govoril o njih in nam jih prikazal na platnu – na misijonski prireditvi v Unionu.

Oglas v časopisu Slovenec, dne 22. oktobra 1933, str. 3

Tonight at the Union Hall we will be able to see representatives of the oldest tribes in the world – dwarf Pygmies from central Africa. The well-known researcher of these tribes, Father Pavel Šebesta [Paul Schebesta], will tell us about them and show them on the screen at the missionary event in the Union Hall.

Advertisement in the newspaper Slovenec, October 22, 1933, p. 3



*Znameniti raziskovalec pragozdnih pritlikavcev (Pigmejcev)
p. Pavel Šebesta bo predaval zvečer ob 8 v unionski verandski dvorani
o najstarejših predstavnikih človeške rase. Predavanje, ki je včeraj
zvečer vzbudilo velikansko zanimanje, je za nočoj bolj znanstveno
zamišljeno in velja v prvi vrsti razumnikom in tistim, ki se pečajo
z etnologijo.*

Ponedeljski Slovenec, 23. oktobra 1933, str. 2

*The famous researcher of the rainforest dwarves (Pygmies) Father
Pavel Šebesta [Paul Schebesta] will hold a lecture on the oldest
representatives of the human race in the veranda hall of Hotel Union
tonight at 8 p.m. Tonight, the lecture, which attracted huge interest
last night, will be more scientifically oriented and principally aimed
at intellectuals and experts in ethnology.*

Ponedeljski Slovenec, October 23, 1933, p. 2

